MAY 5, 1978. No. 83

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RAM

LITTLE RIVER BAND

THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY OF SUCCESS

BOB DYLAN
CONCERT CHAOS

BRYAN FERRY
PRISONER IN MONTREUX

ERIC CLAPTON
RELUCTANT HERO

RUSH
RIGHT WING ROCK

B.B. KING
BLUES ARE FOREVER

THE BABYS · KANSAS · JEFF ST. JOHN · TMG · RED HOT PEPPERS · PAUL McCARTNEY · SWEET · ELVIS COSTELLO

This Ish's letters came out of the NSW postal strike smelling musty. Anyway, they were aired, gently shaken, sorted, edited and written back to. Annie Burton did the ones marked A.B. All other gratuities were penned by Anthony O'Grady who's so famous nowadays he doesn't even have to sign his name.

REELIN' IN PERTH

I've just got back from the grottiest, international concert that anyone is ever likely to see in one lifetime. I suppose you've guessed what concert I'm raging on about? It's the one and only—Beach Boys Concert. It was so bad the support group Stars outrated them!

Carl Wilson was as pissed as a fart and falling all over the stage. Even the other members of the band just walked off the stage while they were supposed to be playing a song.

To top off the whole evening, they were half an hour late coming on after the intermission and after the first two songs they weren't worth waiting for. And the harmony was so lousy even the Bay City Rollers and Leif Garret could have done a better job.

I only hope other international groups don't try to rip off Australian audiences like the Beach Boys did.
The Moonshine Lady
Perth

If the groups don't getcha the promoters will. See this Ish's gloomy report on the Dylan mudlark.

STADIA MADNESS

As my brain cells are recuperating from the goings-on at the Beach Boys concert, a thought enters my mind; why is the NSW government so fucked that it can't build a decent stadium for concerts that are being screwed by the rain? Are they making too much money out of us suckers to be worried about giving us decent concert facilities for large numbers?

And tell ELO to piss off!
Dan & Hug
Hunters Hill

Why indeed? They've done it in Perth via a co-op of promoter and Govt moolah. Big League Promoters in Oz have pulled in untold millions from rock punters and a lot of times the conditions that have had to be put up with have been strictly inhuman. Should I also say we've been saying this for the past year and a half?

As the big names, i.e. Dylan, ELO, Beach Boys etc. continue to rip off the Australian dollar I am stunned at our gullibility in continuing to accept overseas bands who: 1. practise playing music, or worse still, play us tapes;
2. force us to sit on four other people to see them;
3. take at least $9.00 from each of us.
OK, so there are other people involved. Promoters, governments etc., but I can hear the bands laughing all the way back to their homeland, where they *must* produce the material that gave them a name in order to survive.

In April '77 I paid half the Australian price to sit in Wembley Pool and view Floyd, the Eagles and elsewhere, Clapton, who all played at a standard never achieved in Australia. I'm sick of paying through the nose for an OS band's sunny holiday here. "Won't get fooled again!"
Greg Morling

This letter speaks true.

ENTHUSED MADNESS

Yesterday I trooped onwards to Sydney to attend a concert I wasn't really that excited about going to in the first place. To be honest, I was just going to be able to satisfy myself and my musical status by being able to say YES I'VE SEEN THE BEACH BOYS LIVE. . . and who knows if I'd ever get that opportunity again.

Then came the rain. . . constant rain, heavy rain. . . we waited outside the showground for hours along with all those other fools; waiting to see if the promoters would have the sense to postpone the whole damn thing. But cold, wet and rather miserable we all mashed through the gates at 4:30pm to see a concert that was definitely still on, despite the ghastly elements.

We were lucky—we just got into the back row of the grand stand which meant that we weren't getting wet anymore. But what about all those other wet sods on the grass and uncovered seating! The rain came and went all afternoon and night. Ugh, we'd heard so many reports of their lousy Oz concerts, and even Molly Meldrum wrote off their Melbourne gig AND HE NEVER KNOCKS ANYONE! Good God they'd wanna be good after our afternoon of the weather. The people were restless, yet amazingly keen!

Yes, then came the Sydney Beach Boys Concert. They outlived every dream I've ever had of a fantastic concert, and I thought I'd been to some of the greatest in the past. This one was THE concert of my life. They were an event! Those fellas played like you wouldn't believe and sang all those incredible songs that got them their present musical status. Sure the sound system was crummy, and sure, a lot of people were still getting wet, but no-one cared—they were all screaming the lyrics, shaking their bodies and having the time of their lives! I'd pay double, stand in hail and sleet to see a show such as the one we were given. Anyone who didn't go suck eggs or whatever else is available. LONG LIVE THE BEACH BOYS!
Barbara Anne
Newcastle

This letter also speaks true. And while there's such a split between the enjoyment that can *be obtained and the conditions in which they* should *be enjoyed, people are gonna keep on making a lot of money for the wrong reasons. And you're gonna keep on giving it to 'em.*

OK MOMMA, ALREADY

You want I should send my brother-in-law, the Police Inspector, to pay you a visit, huh?

All those wicked things you print about my little boy Robert. Sure, you put black lines all over the naughty words, but who is so foolish they can't read them? You think I'm blind, or something?

My Robert never sold his body to any nice young men in New York, and that's that, already. I mean to say, who in their mind would pay money for a body like that? I'm his mother, I should know. And this Adrian Rawlins person, who is he, that he can talk like that about my little boy? This O'Grady boy, he seems a nice young man—gotta be Jewish—he shouldn't listen to such nonsense.

My boy Robert is very nice, and quiet, and respectable, and the last time I heard from him, he was in some green village place in New York, visiting some sick hillbilly, whatever that means. Robert was playing a guitar and something else you blow in your mouth and make a horrible noise with, and trying so hard to be a pop star—you know how hard it is when you're kosher.

Well, enough already. I must go and get some bagels from the supermarket for my husband's dinner. Our shop sells some chopped liver sandwiches you wouldn't believe. You want I should send you some in a parcel you nice O'Grady boy?
Mrs. Zimmerman,
Duluth, Minnesota.

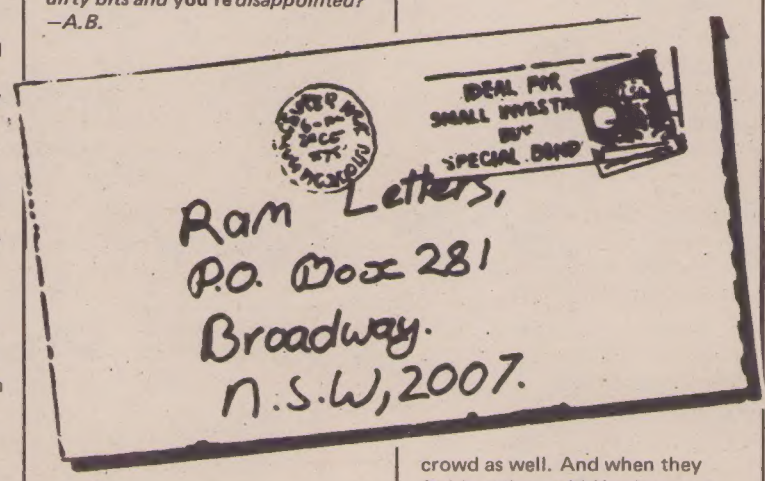
With a name like O'Grady, he's gotta be Jewish. All food donations gratefully appreciated by Andrew McMillan, another nice Jewish boy.—A.B.

MUM'S BACK

I go to the newsagency once a week and pick up magazines for myself and the family. I also bought RAM when the new issue was out.

I won't be buying RAM anymore because it has gone a bit pornographic. Sorry to see this happen.
Disappointed Mother

Gee mum, where? I missed the dirty bits and you're *disappointed? —A.B.*



GLITTER BLINKIES

I am getting a little uptight at the space you devote to punk, new wave and power pop. Truly, this crap is brash, boring, raw and has no imagination. These guys just arrive on the scene and you start printing several pages on them per mag. You even gave us a record of their musical helplessness. Ian Dury is absolutely stuffed; Elvis Costello ain't bad, but he's not all that good either. How about more space on people who've earned their recognition, people who've been around a while, e.g. Queen, Pink Floyd, Yes and Billy Joel.
Banana Bender
Southport, Qld.

They all get coverage—when they deign to speak to the press. Well, Billy's a nice boy but as for Pink Floyd—Greta Garbo does more interviews.

GOD?

RAM No. 80 just floated into the letter box. Mucho wet but still readable; must be the ink you use. Sure tastes good—I use it for rolly paper when I run out of Tally- Ho. But I digress. I agree with a lot of other readers, you ought to cut down on a lot of punk, disco, punk. If the Poms like it let them have it. Give us a bit more homegrown guys. Also, give us some more Led Zep, the only group who has God playing with them, Jimmy Page. That's it, and all you punk rockers, tough. You're a great mag except for the punk shit.
L.J.L.Z.
Yarranowsa

God disagrees. (See letter elsewhere this page).

DRAGON PRO. . .

I'm so stoked. I was just lying around wondering why I wasn't euthanased years ago and the radio spun out *Get That Jive,* and said that 'the Dragon album' had entered *Cashbox* at 141. I LOVE THAT BAND. Every time I see them I get so high on their music it's absolutely incredible. And now they're coming through again and I'm going to be first in line for their shows, here and down the coast. I'd also like to commend your article on groupies. It was an exceptionally piece of honest, enlightening journalism. I can now converse intelligently with all comers (so to speak) on the species. Ta.
Ms. A.S. Incuba

Ta yourself. — A.B./A. O'G.

DRAGON CON

I feel sorry for people who pay money to see nothing but their idols stagger around stage half drunk or high as kites. I went to see Dragon and Finch the other night and was totally disgusted. Finch proved they were the better group as they kept the show rolling the whole time, but as for Dragon, they were simply disgusting.

Marc Hunter was either drunk or half doped, because he had a hard and mournful time trying to get the high notes. The bass guitarist was no better; not only did he spit on the stage, but on the crowd as well. And when they finished they said Horsham was a pissweak town and they were pissing off and we were all a bunch of sucks. Well if they ever get enough guts to return, they will get the same treatment. And we have been told by the theatre owner that they kept their beer cold by squirting and emptying the fire extinguishers on them.
Sharon Hayes
Horsham

Sounds a fairly ingenious method of cooling the tinnies.

HOOKS TAKE I

Thank you Andrew McMillan for reviewing or at least mentioning the Skyhooks Sydney Uni gig. It was unreal. Dave Warner was the perfect support act for the 'Hooks but it won't be long before they're headliners—they're fantastic.

The mighty 'Hooks have to be seen (heard) to be believed these days & the new album's great, (thanks for the review A. O'G).

Referring to the back page of ish 81, didn't LRB, 2SM & Coca-Cola Battlers notice how many people left the concert at the Opera House after Skyhooks went off stage? Well, walking back to the Quay with them all, I did. It made a dedicated 'Hooks fan feel good. Well, why stay longer? The best band had already been on.
Gosford Hooker

HOOKS TAKE 2

Christ, who said Skyhooks were dead! Ever since I saw them at Sydney Uni, (where I boogied into the best gig ever to happen) I've thought 'Shit, reincarnation must really happen!' 'Cause the Hooks have brought the Devil back with 'em to show all their knockers who's the No. 1 recording/live band in Oz!

'Tommy Leonetti, producer of *Guilty Till Proven Insane'?* Don't think so A. O'G, try *Eddie* Leonetti. Don't worry, nobody's perfect.
Happy Hooker
Victoria

Er yes, it was Eddie of course. Sorry Eddie. Also see a clutch of rave 'Hooks reviews from last year. The band was bubbling for a long time before people started seeing the steam.

NOT QUITE

I must admit that it came quite a shock to learn that the thing most Ram readers want see less of is Punk/New Wave. suspect that the problem is a combination of all the hype a all the copy-bands who jumpe on the Punk bandwagon.

But the things that bug me personally are the amount of music lumped into the New Wave/Punk category. When record companies realised Punk had moolah potential, they invented New Wave to attract the put off by the connotations of Punk. But it didn't work. Increasingly, non-Punk bands were promoted as New Wave, as were the punkiest of the punks so that the two terms have come to mean exactly the same thing. And ma people are put off a lot of great new music like Graham Parker & the Rumour or Elvis Costello because they've heard somewher that it is New Wave, which to them means Punk/Violence/being sick and spitting on stage.

Don't get me wrong. I love some (not all) of the punk songs that have come out. But Punk rock is a different music to Graham Parker or Elvis Costello. Big business is what's caused it.

In a couple of years we'll be able to see it all clearly. It's my belief that only a few real talents like G.P. and a few of the better bands will survive.
David Pannell

Your theory's neatly worked out, but a bit historically inaccurate. 'New wave' was a term the British music press came up with to label a certain type of new music, safety pin punk and non-punk alike—not the record companies. It was seized on by bands in an attempt to get around the venue bans they faced in London whenever the word 'punk' was whispered. Nowadays after further mutation, "New Wave" is an "art-music" band like Television or Blondie and "Punk" is anti-melody stuff a la Sex Pistols.

YES SON?

The Electric Mayham are the future of rock and roll.
God

Very pleased to meet you sir. We don't like to question your word, but may we ask who *you're talking about?—A.B.*

ATTENTION MR. McMILLAN

Just a short note to thank you very much for the great article on C.I.T.Y. in R.A.M. It is very important for us to get C.I.T.Y. across to young unemployed people in magazines such as yours in the way in which the article was written.

We have had a few calls from unemployed youth since your article and have even had a letter from a person in Brisbane who read the article.
Yours sincerely,
Debbie Barnes
Youth Work Unit

Andrew (who wrote the thing) is dead chuffed. We reckon peop who go to a rock concert are as important as its stars. See openi letters. End of speech.

Will the heightened rock awareness expressed above continue to flourish? Will rock punters forget the theoretical delights of arguing about who's this week's God Guitarist and stand up for their human rights, not to mention value for ticket prices? Keep reading, keep writing. . . we'll all find ou

Funhouse

AN OPEN LETTER TO PAT CONDON AND AGC PARADINE PATERSON. (WHICH IS NOT TO SAY THERE AREN'T POINTS OF INTEREST HERE FOR ALL OTHER PROMOTERS)

Dear Pat;

As managing director of the concert division of AGC Paradine Paterson you've been receiving truckloads of mud concerning AGC's handling of the Beach Boys and Bob Dylan concerts.

Well you're a natty dresser Pat so thankfully it wasn't physical mud—the sloshy stuff that people in Melbourne and Sydney had to stand in while watching the aged surfers and Bobby.

It's more verbal vitriol—accusations of "incompetence" and "rip off."

In fact, one Dylanologist on 2JJ said you and the other chiefs in your organisation should be thrown into gaol for "criminal negligence."

But not us. We know you were well within your legal rights to charge up to $12.50 for a plastic seat sunk in six inches of ooze. The same goes for selling so many unreserved tickets for the Melbourne Myer Music Bowl that a large section of the crowd (estimated between 25 to 50 per cent) couldn't get a clear view of the stage.

But then we've all heard all this before. We've been criticising the whole concept of outdoor concerts for the past eighteen months and you've copped enough of the above complaints to last you the next eighteen.

Besides, it's always complaints from Sydney and Melbourne,isn't it? Brisbane (where one way or another they refuse to let you hold outdoor concerts), Adelaide and Perth never seem to get all that riled up.

Of course, Perth has a large indoor venue and Adelaide has a nicely-sized, well set out outdoor venue in Westlakes Stadium.

Only thing Pat, Melbourne and Sydney being the two most populated cities in Oz happen to provide most of the moolah that make it possible for you to pay an approx. million dollars each for the Beach Boys and Dylan and if you've done your sums, to make a profit.

But someone should tell you Pat, the Melbourne and Sydney street vibe is getting a trifle nasty.

Now everyone knows the main attraction of a large outdoor concert is not the music at all but "the eventness" of the thing.

Well golly gee Pat, at RAM we're always willing to be part of An Event.

But all this promoter and supergroup-inspired waffle about "it's not so much a concert as An Event" is on the verge of turning from a docile let's-all-dance-in-the-rain Woodstock vibe into an Oz version of Altamont.

You have read about Woodstock and Altamont haven't you Pat?

They're the archetypal examples of mass rock-crowd psychology.

At Woodstock they sat in the mud and said groovy man. At Altamont they switched to blood-lust.

It just goes to show, you can't take too many chances.

At the moment in Sydney there's a group called The Sewer Rats who see themselves as a fifth columnist of the music industry.

They're reputed to have printed 20,000 forged tickets for the Dylan concert which is why an estimated crowd of 30,000 looked something like 45,000 to me. The Sewer Rats say they don't like making pop stars or promoters into instant millionaires. Especially if it seems they're not giving value for money. In fact they're downright angry *at the prices charged for the conditions and music value given. It all depends what scale of values you have whether you agree or disagree. But the Rats say they'll do it again and outdoor concerts are their main goal.*

Just picture 15,000 or so forged ticket holders doing battle with security guards while 30,000 paying customers are trying to surge through the gates. It could be a very nasty situation. Especially if the guerillas get any sort of mass support.

But could they?

Well let me put it this way. At the Sydney Showground in the last week of March they herded together a whole bunch of dumb animals and made them parade around in the rain. They made them jump fences and slosh through puddles and stand to be examined at one inspection after another.

No, that wasn't the Bob Dylan concert, that was the Sydney Easter Show. After the Show they closed the gates, let it rain on the mess for a few days then they opened the gates and let the dumbest, meanest-treated animal pack (ie a concert crowd) paw and pour through the gates. That *was the Bob Dylan concert.*

Now I'm a great believer in the power of music to transcend the petty discomforts of modern day life, but the imagery just won't go away. And it doesn't make me feel good inside like good music or even "An Event" should. Know what I mean?

Now I know you're a busy man, but maybe you could answer a few simple questions. Like:

(1) Exactly how many tickets were sold to the Melbourne Myer Music Bowl?

(2) In the few days between the Easter Show and the April's Fool's Day Dylan concert, was it not possible to cover over the quagmire with dry soil?

(3) Why were the portable toilets in the $10.95 unreserved section locked throughout the concert?

(4) What happened to your organisation of bouncers, security men, ticket-takers, etc?

(By 8.30 they just weren't in evidence at all. Many reserved seat ticket holders were left stranded with no way of finding or claiming the seat in the mud they'd paid for).

(5) Why was the invitation list of reviewers cut in half four days before the concert?

The last question I just threw in for laughs. For obviously it's no use having a publicity lady ring people and tell them they can't have review tickets if the doormen you've hired are so unorganised that it was possible to walk through the gate with no ticket at all. Still, answers would be appreciated.

Oh, nearly forgot. . . you did hand out sheets of plastic for people to sit on, supposedly between 15,000 and 20,000 sheets. Only thing is, the few people I saw with plastic sheeting found the stuff totally ineffective against the conditions.

Isn't it marvellous that so far a whole lot of very important points about the concert have been raised and Dylan's music *hasn't yet been mentioned?*

Well that's the way it is with Events. Even though you're supposed to be there for the two-dimensional pinpoint a quarter of a mile away, it hardly ever works out that way. Especially if you came to see DYLAN (as in THE Big Experience) and all you can see is a pinpoint a quarter of a mile away. Also the sound quality from the back was just shithouse. Through most of the grandstand area the sound was battling with its own echo for prominence. And Dylan himself was hardly the life of the party. Occasionally between songs he'd say "thank you".

Mostly he'd introduce the numbers with terse one-liners. If you couldn't see the man or hear the music, there was literally nothing else coming from the stage to raise flagging spirits.

This accounts for the steady stream of people leaving from 8.30 onwards, some actually crying because they'd come for magic and got a mud pie in the eye.

Up closer it was a different story. When you could see the man and hear the band, the whole thing was a very clever show indeed. What Dylan did basically was to re-arrange his best known songs to fit their own present legendary status. Thus "Blowin' In The Wind" became a gently arranged, soft-spoken narrative ballad instead of an angry acoustic workout. "All Along The Watchtower" became a piece of hard rock, swirling, modern psychedelia. "Just Like A Woman" was a soft sinuous purr, without the original venom. "Like A Rolling Stone" was a near chaotic boilover and "Rainy Day Women" was a pumping mess of rock with real urgency. He gave two encores on the night—the reggae "Knockin On Heaven's Door" and a rock/pop delivery of "Lay Lady Lay".

It was a gambit but it mostly worked. It seemed as if he was re-working the songs as he'd feel about them if he were writing them now. One thing it did do was force new concentration on the actual lyrics.

You certainly couldn't sit back and let the familiar arrangements drift over you. You had to reassess each song as it came, which meant if you came for music and by chance could actually hear it, chances were you'd have been impressed.

The band behind Bob didn't actually shine. In fact they sometimes had difficulty keeping pace with the re-arrangements. Or maybe it's just Bob's way of changing things around whenever the mood seems right. Certainly I've never seen such concentration from the backing band on the front man.

I suppose it goes down as The Day The Promoters Bombed Out, But Bobby Won Through.

But don't let it worry you Pat. After all there's always next summer.

Besides some people right up the back who couldn't see or hear what was going down upfront reckoned it was the most marvellous night they'd ever had. They'd do it all over again even if the tickets were over $20.

With customers like that Pat, how can you lose?

Anthony O'Grady

DIRT

G.P. MANIA IN LONDON

In London, **G.P. and The Rumour** fans are so rabidly eager that tickets to a television studio where the band was making an appearance for a BBC rock programme fell into the hands of scalpers. The tickets, issued free by the BBC, were changing hands for twelve bucks each in nearby pubs before the studio taping. Those who made it into the studio saw what the home viewers missed—**Graham Parker** doing an encore with a white ferret slung over his arm. The ferret was alive at the time incidentally. . .

NEW DIRECTION FOR SAYER

Leo Sayer, who arrives in Australia this month for his third tour, says he'll be veering away from the disco sound for his next album.

Sayer says he wants to get back to his original style and he'll be writing much of the material on the new album.

Once again, **Richard Perry** will produce.

DR HOOK RETURN

Dr. Hook will be back in Australia in May for a national tour.

The American group, who've scored with hits like *Sylvia's Mother, Cover Of The Rolling Stone, Only 16, A Little Bit More,* and, most recently, *Walk Right In,* toured here early last year and won audiences over with their outrageous stage show.

EMI are releasing a best of Hook compilation, *Remedies,* to coincide with the tour.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Princess Margaret is a punk royal"—British MP Willie Hamilton.

Bonnie Tyler after two hit singles and no album now headlining her first set of concerts in England. New single is *Here I Am.*

NO MORE RODNEY GOSSIP (FOR A WHILE)

Rod Stewart has been laying low of late.

Actually he's in the studio recording his new album with the same band that appeared on the platinum *Footloose And Fancy Free* album.

Stewart's recent *You're In My Heart* single has been certified gold in the U.S. after selling more than a million copies.

Ol '55 currently gigging to promote new single *(Feels Like A) Summer's Night.* The much mooted new album *Cruisin' For A Bruisin* is currently being recorded and should be ready for May release. . .

THE BEE GEES GOSSIP COLUMN

Robert Stigwood was horribly miffed the Bee Gees soundtrack for *Saturday Night Fever* wasn't granted even an Oscar.nomination.

Never mind lads, the consolation prize is you've now earned more moolah from record sales than the Beatles. As for lucky Bob Stigwood he not only produced *Saturday Night Fever,* he manages the Bros Gibb.

Overseas gossip columns now dub former Ozzie Robert Stigwood, 'the Rupert Murdoch of rock'.

The Bee Gees are no longer so insistent about being British, (even though they were born there), and now cheerfully call themselves Australian in the press. It's the country where they grew up, alright, but it must be getting fashionable to claim Oz citizenship; the Bee Gees always used to vehemently deny they were Australian.

Kim Gibb now in the U.S. with legal representatives "to obtain security and maintenance for my daughter and myself." She'll meet with Gibb's lawyers. Estranged hubby, young **Andy**, is currently in Amsterdam, laid low with hepatitis.

GET STAFFED

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Rumour has it **Frank Sinatra** will be back in Australia for another series of exorbitantly priced concerts around June or July. Just in case anyone's forgotten about Frank's charming manners during his last visit, here's a current reminder.

He and his wife **Barbara** were out dining with friends in Los Angeles last week and Mrs. Sinatra suggested it would be better for her husband not to drink beer because it disagrees with him. With lightning wit, Sinatra replied: "If I want a beer I'll have a beer. So just sit there and eat your food. When I'm talking keep your mouth shut and don't interrupt."

You'd think life for sixteen year old **Leif Garrett,** already a self-made millionaire, would be just hunky dory, wouldn't you?

Not quite, it seems. When poor young Leif returned to America after his recent promotional tour of Australia, he had to undergo therapy on his arm for a ligament torn when he was outrun by enthusiastic fans in Brisbane's Botanical Gardens.

Governor of California **Jerry Brown's** chances of making President of the U.S. have slumped after it became common knowledge he was carrying on with the "notoriously sinful" **Linda Ronstadt.**

RETHATCHED ELTON RETURNS!

Elton John has re-emerged after a solid period of football club chairmanship.

His new single *Ego* has been described as John and his lyricist, Bernie Taupin's most savage song, a diatribe, and possibly the best record Elton John has ever made. It's also provoked a wild guessing game as to who the song's protagonists might be, in the manner of Carly Simon's *You're So Vain* single.

John was recently given an award by London's Capital Radio. Elton accepted his award, saying that as he hadn't had any records out for two years, *"this award really belongs to Elvis Costello."* Whoever the real people described in his *Ego* single might be, Elton John himself isn't one of them. . .

GOOD NEWS FOR TREKKIES

As we all know, trekkies are **Star Trek** freaks. They do things like hold conventions, give parties where everyone comes dressed as a space thing, petition tv stations for the umpteenth re-run of Star Trek, and there are *millions* of 'em world-wide.

Star Trek stars **Leonard Nimroy** and **William Shatner** think their fans are slightly crazy. Shatner still needs a tall fence and a platoon of guard dogs to keep enthusiastic trekkies at bay.

The good news is, after years of negotiations and re-negotiations, Shatner and Nimroy have signed for a big, big, *BIG budget* **Star Trek** movie.

NEW DANCE OF THE WEEK

It's called The Spank and you pat your partner's funky butt. It's taken off in the U.S on the strength of two singles —Le Spank and Spank Your Blank Blank. You get sore feet and you can't sit down.

SHIT-SNIFFERS UNITE

Well, it's probably better than shit-kicking, but it's still a lousy job. A mushroom grower in West Germany who lost his sense of smell after a road accident has been awarded a disability pension. He said he needed a good nose 'cos he had to sniff manure for his mushrooms several times a day to test for quality.

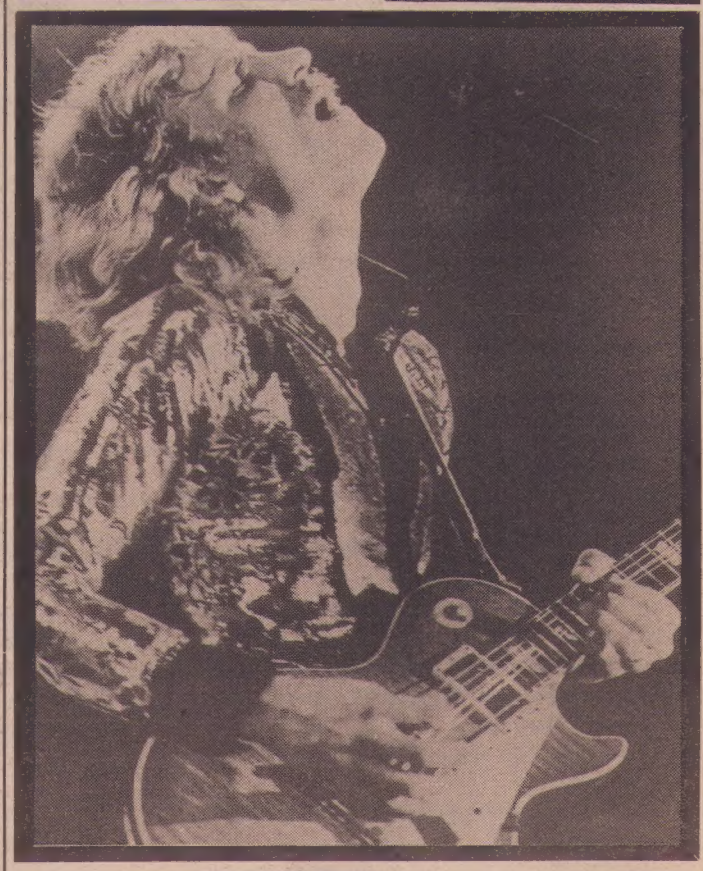
Keeping It All In The Family: *Billy Joel's manager is his wife, Elizabeth.*

Lucky **Dragon** members and Drag producer **Peter Dawkins** now sporting custom-made black silk Dragon jackets made by **Portrait** in the USA at a trifling cost of $150 each. Portrait made 'em as a promotional give-away.

X-Ray Spex, the London band best known, or rather, notorious for their single called *Oh Bondage! Up Yours!*, have been signed to the giant E.M.I. International organisation.

X-Ray Spex stars a chubby fifteen year old girl with a mouthful of fearsome braces on lead vocals, who goes under the name of Poli Styrene. At one stage, Poli got sent back to school, but her parents have allowed her to leave after the lucre started rolling in. The Spex have completed a hugely successful series of six gigs at New York's prestigious C.B.G.B.'s, the place that spawned Blondie, Television, Richard Hell and the like.

New UK single from X-Ray Spex *The Day The World Turned Day-Glo* gets to be pressed on livid orange vinyl, natch.



RY COODER FINALLY MAKES IT TO OZ

After twelve months of negotiations, guitarist Ry Cooder is at last visiting Australia. Cooder will be performing solo.

He has been referred to as the finest, most precise bottleneck guitar player alive today. In 1963 he formed a blues act with singer/songwriter Jackie De Shannon, then in 1966, he was in a delta-blues band, Rising Sons, with leading young American blues player Taj Mahal.

He was also involved with soundtracks for *Candy* **and** *Performance. Performance* **featured Mick Jagger who was so impressed, he utilised Cooder on The Stones** *Let It Bleed.*

In 1970 Cooder started his own solo recording career and has been responsible for re-working many little-known, but vital, blues songs from America's past.

Starting with *Ry Cooder* **in 1970 Cooder has released six albums. His most popular set was** *Chicken Skin Music,* **released in 1976. Late in '77 he released the live** *Show Time.*

Cooder's tour starts on May I at the Sydney Opera House.

JOE WALSH REFUSES SOLO ALBUM

Joe Walsh, nowadays the flash guitarist for **The Eagles** but still an occasional solo artist, has taken a dim view of an album release in Britain supposed to be his. It turns out the album, *So Far So Good,* is Joe's work, but the release went ahead without his approval. The quality does not reach the high standard Joe sets for himself.

So in order to make things perfectly clear, Joe took out music paper advertising space: "To the English Music Community: I wish it to be known that the current ABC/Anchor release *Joe Walsh So Far So Good* was initiated without my consent. I was not involved in any phase of the LP's release. Best regards, Joe Walsh."

Anyway he doesn't need the solo money—for the past eighteen months the Eagles have been selling **a million albums** every month.

RUTLES WILL ESCAPE IN OZ

After some hesitation over whether to release **The Rutles,** WEA Australia have decided to go ahead. The Rutles were concocted by **Eric Idle,** member of the **Monty Python** team. The Rutles are a spoof of the Beatles. The album is a piss-take of famous Beatles tunes with new, satiric lyrics. The album cover manages to include send ups of four Beatles album covers. It's called (what else) *All You Need Is Cash.* The Rutles is also a 90 minute tv special featuring the group and **Mick** and **Bianca Jagger.** Jagger plays himself as he reminisces about the early days when **The Rolling Stones** and **The Rutles** were arch rivals.

CLIFF RICHARD TO TOUR

Cliff Richard fronts through Australia in May for his umpteenth Oz tour. The singer's career revived dramatically in 1976 with the release of the album *I'm Nearly Famous.* The single, *Devil Woman,* was a world-hit, giving Richard his first sizable hit in the USA after nearly 16 years as a superstar in England, Australia, New Zealand, The Continent and Asia.

EMI are re-promoting a 40-track double set, *40 Golden Greats,* to coincide with the tour.

McCARTNEY GOES DADSY

With **Wings'** new release *London Town* an instant commercial success, maybe their biggest yet, **Paul McCartney** is praising family life as the right way for him.

McCartney told reporters in America: "I used to wake up to chicks and old drinks. Now I wake up to my own children. 1977 has been a recording year for Wings. We didn't want to go out because that's very hectic; what with a new baby. You can't leap offstage and say 'Sorry folks, we've just got to have our baby, excuse us a minute. . .' "

Still, the onstage birth of the McCartney's baby son **Louis** could have made interesting viewing for even the most jaded concert goer.

SPORTS SINGLE

Melbourne pub band **Sports** have released a new single called *Boys! (What Did The Detective Say?)*

It's their first major release. Sports' last single was a private pressing of just a few hundred copies. Called *Fair Game,* it picked up complimentary reviews in the English rock press.

Sports' first album is due for release within the next month.

The first 5,000 copies of *Boys* went out in a picture sleeve.

CHICK COREA- OZ DEBUT IN MAY.

Chick Corea three times Grammy Award winner and founder of the renowned pioneer jazz rock fusion band, *Return To Forever* plays Australia in May.

He brings a 13 piece band including his wife, keyboard player/vocalist Gayle Moran.

Corea has played with virtually every major jazz artist of the past decade including Stan Getz, Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Herbie Mann, Flora Purim and Jean Luc Ponty. Return To Forever consisted of bassist Stanley Clarke, guitarist Al Dimeola and drummer Lenny White. After a series of well received, well selling albums the band temporarily retired.

Gayle Moran appeared on *Apocalypse* and *Visions Of Emerald Beyond* by Mahavishnu Orchestra with John McLaughlin.

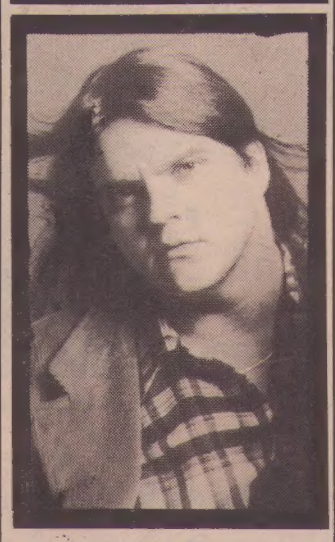
Corea will perform selections from all areas of his career, including Return To Forever, and his four solo albums. Phonogram are releasing his latest solo work, *The Mad Hatter,* to coincide with the tour.

Corea has won 30 major music awards so far in his career, including poll wins conducted by Down Beat, Melody Maker and Playboy.

Marcia Hines' *Music Is My Life,* was taken to America by Sydney morning radio personality **Steve Raymond.**

He played it on air in LA and the radio station had a lot of interested phone calls inquiring about the singer—a good quick temperature test of the likely American reaction if Marcia decides to take the big step homeward.

In the meantime, her new double live elpee *Marcia Across Australia* has shipped 100,000.



MEATLOAF COMETH? SON OF SPAM TO TOUR

Meatloaf, the three hundred pound Spam of a singer whose single *You Took The Words Right Out Of My Mouth* was a hit in Oz, is scheduled to tour Australia in June.

Meatloaf's album *Bat Out Of Hell* is still racing up the charts here.

Ex-Sex Pistols bass player Sid Vicious making a new career out of being just plain outrageous, without bothering about the bass playing part.

Latest additions to the Thoughts of Chairperson Sid concern his preoccupation with death. Seems young Vicious is afraid of it. His American girlfriend, known as Nauseating Nancy, says she intends to kill herself as soon as she begins to lose her looks. A panel of beauticians say Nancy won't be with us for long. As for Mr. Vicious, he just thinks he won't be around for long, regardless. "I'll die before I get old," says Sid.

IS *THIS* THE WAY TO DO OPEN AIR?

An entire temporary city is being constructed at the Ontario Motor Speedway in California to house an anticipated audience of between three and four hundred thousand people. The bands all those people will come to see are **Aerosmith, Foreigner, Heart; Dave Mason, Ted Nugent, Santana, Rubicon** and **Bob Welch.** Who gets top billing hasn't been settled yet. And you thought *all* outdoor concerts were mud and rain and toilets that don't work?

In America, there are now disposable **Rock Lighters** for indisposable groups. The lighters have not the faces, but the *logos,* of **The Bee Gees, Boston, the Doobie Brothers, the Commodores, Peter Frampton, Jefferson Starship, the Steve Miller Band, Fleetwood Mac, Foreigner, the Marshall Tucker Band** and **Yes.**

Manning, the group formed by guitarist Phil Manning late last year, will release its first album this month.

Self titled, the album was recorded in Melbourne with English producer **David Hitchcock,** whose past credits include recordings with **Genesis, Camel** and **Caravan.**

Manning's new single, written by the Tasmanian born guitarist, is *Call Me.*

On America's West Coast, Patti Smith is getting a lot of radio exposure with her latest single, *Because The Night.* The song was written with Bruce Springsteen, and it's getting to be the closest thing Patti's ever had to normal radio airplay.

But Ms Smith keeps putting Springsteen down at every opportunity. There doesn't seem to be any apparent reason, except that perhaps Patti doesn't like to share the limelight with anyone.

Jo Jo Zep And The Falcons second album *Whip It Out* now released in Europe.

The Melbourne based rhythm and blues band is planning to bring an overseas producer in to work on their next album. Among the names that have been suggested are **Nick Lowe,** whose solo album *Jesus Of Cool* was released recently, and Blondie's producer **Richard Gotterher.**

Meanwhile, Jo Jo Zep's live e.p. *Loud And Clear* is climbing the charts.

Heart returning to studios to finish recording *Magazine,* an album they deserted when they split from the Canadian Mushroom Co. for the U.S. Portrait label.

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OZ SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
2	(2)	ISN'T IT TIME	The Babys
3	(5)	SOMETIMES WHEN WE TOUCH	Dan Hill
4	(4)	IF I HAD WORDS	Scott Fitzgerald and Yvonne Keeley
5	(7)	EBONY EYES	Bob Welch
6	(3)	IT'S A HEARTACHE	Bonnie Tyler
7	(6)	EMOTION	Samantha Sang
8	(9)	YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH	Meat Loaf
9	(12)	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Billy Joel
10	(10)	YES SIR I CAN BOOGIE	Baccara
11	(8)	RUNAROUND SUE	Leif Garrett
12	(11)	HOW DEEP IS YOUR LOVE	Bee Gees
13	(15)	(LOVE IS) THICKER THAN WATER	Andy Gibb
14	(14)	NEEDLES AND PINS	Smokie
15	(16)	BABY COME BACK	Player
16	(20)	CALLING OCCUPANTS OF INTERPLANETARY CRAFT	Carpenters
17	(22)	•WOMEN IN UNIFORM	Skyhooks
18	(13)	SURFIN' USA	Leif Garrett
19	(18)	NOBODY DOES IT BETTER	Carly Simon
20	(19)	MULL OF KINTYRE/GIRLS SCHOOL	Wings
21	(17)	HERE YOU COME AGAIN	Dolly Parton
22	(24)	THE CRUNCH	The Rah Band
23	(21)	BLUE BAYOU	Linda Ronstadt
24	(27)	STANDING IN THE RAIN	John Paul Young
25	(23)	2.4.6.8 MOTORWAY	Tom Robinson Band
26	(25)	FEELS LIKE IT'S SLIPPIN' AWAY	Sherbet
27	(26)	TAKE A CHANCE ON ME	Abba
28	(28)	WHERE WERE YOU	Finch
29	(–)	MUSIC IS MY LIFE	Marcia Hines
30	(30)	UPTOWN FESTIVAL	Shalamar

OZ ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	Original Movie Soundtrack
2	(6)	MASTERPIECES	Bob Dylan
3	(2)	SIMPLE DREAMS	Linda Ronstadt
4	(5)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
5	(3)	LEIF GARRETT	Leif Garrett
6	(4)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
7	(12)	•BAT OUT OF HELL	Meat Loaf
8	(7)	MARCIA HINES LIVE ACROSS AUSTRALIA	Marcia Hines
9	(8)	WEEKEND IN L.A.	George Benson
10	(10)	LONGER FUSE	Dan Hill
11	(14)	BROKEN HEART	The Babys
12	(11)	DOWN TWO THEN LEFT	Boz Scaggs
13	(9)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra
14	(18)	BREEZIN'	George Benson
15	(25)	•GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INSANE	Skyhooks
16	(15)	SILK DEGREES	Boz Scaggs
17	(16)	RUNNING ON EMPTY	Jackson Browne
18	(–)	•LONDON TOWN	Wings
19	(20)	FRENCH KISS	Bob Welch
20	(13)	ABBA–THE ALBUM	Abba
21	(17)	FOOT LOOSE & FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
22	(19)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra
23	(23)	FOREIGNER	Foreigner
24	(22)	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN'S GREATEST HITS VOLUME 2	
25	(–)	• MY AIM IS TRUE	Elvis Costello
26	(21)	PARADISE	Stars
27	(28)	MOONFLOWER	Santana
28	(26)	DON'T LET ME BE MISUNDERSTOOD	Santa Esmeralda
29	(24)	I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE WITH ME TONIGHT	Neil Diamond
30	(–)	LINDA RONSTADT'S GREATEST HITS	Linda Ronstadt

U.K. SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	DENIS	Blondie
2	(3)	WUTHERING HEIGHTS	Kate Bush
3	(2)	BAKER STREET	Gerry Rafferty
4	(4)	MATCHSTALK MEN AND MATCHSTALK CATS AND DOGS	Brian and Michael
5	(17)	•I WONDER WHY	Showaddywaddy
6	(12)	•IF YOU CAN'T GIVE ME LOVE	Suzi Quatro
7	(5)	I CAN'T STAND THE RAIN	Eruption
8	(7)	IS THIS LOVE	Bob Marley and the Wailers
9	(6)	I LOVE THE SOUND OF BREAKING GLASS	Nick Lowe
10	(16)	•FOLLOW YOU FOLLOW ME	Genesis
11	(9)	EVERY 1'S A WINNER	Hot Chocolate
12	(8)	WISHING ON A STAR	Rose Royce
13	(15)	FANTASY	Earth, Wind and Fire
	(21)	•(I DON'T WANT TO GO TO) CHELSEA	Elvis Costello and the Attractions
15	(23)	•WALK IN LOVE	Manhattan Transfer
16	(24)	•NEVER LET HER SLIP AWAY	Andrew Gold
17	(10)	EMOTION	Samantha Sang
18	(12)	STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
19	(14)	COME BACK MY LOVE	Darts
20	(22)	ALLY'S TARTAN ARMY	Andy Cameron
21	(25)	TOO MUCH, TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE	Johnny Mathis/Deniece Williams
22	(20)	RUMOUR HAS IT	Donna Summer
	(–)	•WITH A LITTLE LUCK	Wings
24	(27)	SOMETIMES WHEN WE TOUCH	Dan Hill
25	(–)	•MORE LIKE THE MOVIES	Dr. Hook
26	(–)	•EVERYBODY DANCE	Chic
27	(26)	WHENEVER YOU WANT MY LOVE	Real Thing
28	(18)	MR. BLUE SKY	Electric Light Orchestra
29	(11)	TAKE A CHANCE ON ME	Abba
30	(30)	THE GHOST OF LOVE	Tavares

Two titles tied for 13th and 22nd positions.

U.K. ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(3)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Buddy Holly and the Crickets
2	(1)	THE ALBUM	Abba
3	(2)	THE KICK INSIDE	Kate Bush
4	(5)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra
5	(6)	PLASTIC LETTERS	Blondie
6	(7)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
	(10)	REFLECTIONS	Andy Williams
8	(4)	CITY TO CITY	Gerry Rafferty
9	(13)	KAYA	Bob Marley and the Wailers
10	(9)	THIS YEAR'S MODEL	Elvis Costello
11	(–)	•20 GOLDEN GREATS	Nat King Cole
12	(11)	VARIATIONS	Andrew Lloyd Webber
13	(12)	ANOTHER MUSIC IN A DIFFERENT KITCHEN	Buzzcocks
14	(23)	•SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	Various Artists
15	(17)	FONZIE FAVOURITES	Various Artists

16	(19)	NEW BOOTS AND PANTIES	Ian Dury
17	(8)	BOOGIE NIGHTS	Various Artists
	(14)	25 THUMPING GREAT HITS	Dave Clark Five
19	(22)	GENERATION X	
20	(16)	JESUS OF COOL	Nick Lowe
21	(19)	ALL 'N' ALL	Earth, Wind and Fire
22	(18)	FOOT LOOSE AND FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
23	(26)	THE SOUND OF BREAD	Bread
24	(24)	EASTER	Patti Smith
25	(15)	DISCO STARS	Various Artists
26	(27)	BAT OUT OF HELL	Meat Loaf
27	(19)	DARTS	
	(–)	THE MUPPET SHOW VOL. 2	Muppets
29	(28)	PASTICHE	Manhattan Transfer
30	(–)	STILL LIVE STIFFS	Various Artists

Two titles tied for 6th, 17th, and 27th positions.

U.S. SINGLES

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	NIGHT FEVER	Bee Gees
2	(2)	CAN'T SMILE WITHOUT YOU	Barry Manilow
3	(3)	LAY DOWN SALLY	Eric Clapton
4	(4)	STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
5	(10)	•DUST IN THE WIND	Kansas
6	(6)	THUNDER ISLAND	Jay Ferguson
7	(8)	JACK AND JILL	Raydio
8	(9)	IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU	Yvonne Elliman
9	(5)	EMOTION	Samantha Sang
10	(14)	RUNNING ON EMPTY	Jackson Browne
11	(7)	I GO CRAZY	Paul Davis
12	(13)	ALWAYS AND FOREVER	Heatwave
13	(15)	EBONY EYES	Bob Welch
14	(16)	GOODBYE GIRL	David Gates
15	(18)	THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND	Andrew Gold
16	(17)	OUR LOVE	Natalie Cole
17	(19)	FLASHLIGHT	Parliament
18	(20)	BEFORE MY HEART FINDS OUT	Gene Cotton
19	(23)	WE'LL NEVER HAVE TO SAY GOODBYE AGAIN	England Dan And John Ford Coley
20	(21)	LADY LOVE	Lou Rawls
21	(28)	•THE CLOSER I GET TO YOU	Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway
22	(22)	(LOVE IS) THICKER THAN WATER	Andy Gibb
23	(26)	SWEET TALKIN' WOMAN	Electric Light Orchestra
24	(27)	COUNT ON ME	Jefferson Starship
25	(27)	THEME FROM WHICH WAY IS UP	Stargard
26	(30)	FOOLING YOURSELF	Styx
27	(25)	HOT LEGS	Rod Stewart
28	(11)	SOMETIMES WHEN WE TOUCH	Dan Hill
29	(–)	BABY HOLD ON	Eddie Money
30	(–)	IMAGINARY LOVER	Atlanta Rhythm Section

U.S. ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	Various Artists
2	(4)	EVEN NOW	Barry Manilow
3	(3)	SLOWHAND	Eric Clapton
4	(2)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
5	(5)	RUNNING ON EMPTY	Jackson Browne
6	(7)	WEEKEND IN L.A.	George Benson
7	(6)	AJA	Steely Dan
8	(8)	POINT OF KNOW RETURN	Kansas
9	(11)	EARTH	Jefferson Starship
10	(9)	NEWS OF THE WORLD	Queen

11	(12)	BLUE LIGHTS IN THE BASEMENT	Roberta Flack
12	(10)	THE GRAND ILLUSION	Styx
13	(13)	FOOT LOOSE AND FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
14	(17)	FRENCH KISS	Bob Welch
15	(16)	STREET PLAYER	Rufus
16	(14)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
17	(22)	•WAITING FOR COLUMBUS	Little Feat
18	(19)	HERE AT LAST. . .BEE GEES . . . LIVE	Bee Gees
19	(15)	DOUBLE LIVE GONZO	Ted Nugent
20	(20)	ALL 'N' ALL	Earth, Wind and Fire,
21	(18)	SIMPLE DREAMS	Linda Ronstadt
22	(23)	BOOTSY? PLAYER OF THE YEAR	Bootsy's Rubber Band
23	(21)	WAYLON & WILLIE	Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson
24	(25)	THANKFUL	Natalie Cole
25	(29)	FLOWING RIVERS	Andy Gibb
26	(26)	STREET SURVIVORS	Lynyrd Skynyrd
27	(–)	EXCITABLE BOY	Warren Zevon
28	(–)	FEELS SO GOOD	Chuck Mangione
29	(–)	INFINITY	Journey
30	(30)	TEN YEARS OF GOLD	Kenny Rogers

Charts courtesy Kent Music

RED HOT PEPPERS DO THE COOL CUCUMBER

Andrea Jones

Red Hot Peppers, one of the biggest acts on the Melbourne pub circuit, are a PR man's dream come true.

Even if the name doesn't satisfy the writer's verbiage-hungry fingers, the fact that RHP play over *100 instruments* should.

The band collect influences like urban dwellers collect neuroses. The band refuse to be pinned down to one style. In fact, lead vocalist Marion Arts said she can't cope with more than three country songs without getting bored.

Red Hot Peppers take their name from Jelly Roll Morton's New Orleans jazz band of the same name. But this New Zealand version plays a basic format of country/blues/jazz. Around it they work band-leader Robbie Laven's menagerie of medieval and primitive instruments.

Robbie estimates it will be about ten years before he sees his entire collection of instruments together. At present they are hanging on friends' walls, rotting in neighbours' garages and collecting dust back home in New Zealand.

His zoo-proportioned musical menagerie has attracted the band a lot of press attention, but Robbie is adamant it was not intended as a gimmick. "The drive behind the use of these instruments is musical, not to see how many instruments we can get on stage," he explains.

"From a recording point of view it takes away the limitations completely. It also gives the album a cohesive quality to have these sounds recurring throughout and to have *us* playing them. Most session players sound like session players. But we don't have to use them. We are a lot freer because we know we have the use of these sounds at a finger-click's notice; *and,*" he stresses, "we can reproduce *all* these sounds in concert."

The group's influences are unusually diverse. Marion's only vocal training was in Gregorian Chants at a NZ convent school. She cites her favourite singers as Billie Holliday, Marlene Dietrich, Maria Muldaur . . . Robbie on the other hand is into Ry Cooder and Keith Richard. All of these and many other styles come out in their music.

Robbie's aim with RHP is "to combine the intense fire of the European gypsies with the control and laid-back quality of early negro jazz." *(Al Grassby* will *be pleased!—ed).*

This aim is interpreted in different forms. One minute it is a countrified lullaby like *Tears of Silver,* the next it's dixieland jazz like *Heebie Jeebies* and then it is a real country and western thing like *Sitting By The Roadside (Sighing).*

By this stage, your average semi-comatosed pub crowd has been left way, way behind. Marion said, "When we first came here we found that the audience had a real need to *identify* with the music."

Their single *Tears of Silver* has had that effect. It is something that the crowd can latch onto. Although it's not a chart-buster, Robbie is pleased with what it has done. "It has warmed everyone to us. We have made a lot of friends through it. I don't think it's a single, but it hasn't put anyone off—it's made a lot of goodwill towards us.

"Singles success is so important in Australia, but we're not a singles band. We wouldn't be able to portray what we do fully on a single." Of course not. How could you get Jelly Roll Morton, Marlene Dietrich and Little Feat into one, commercially viable 1978 single?

Is the broadness of their music commercially a bad move? The band admits there have been strong pressures to limit their styles and tone down the experiment bit.

But RHP won't have a bar of this. They're dedicated to what they do and determined to be successful with it. They say the fact they survived the New Zealand scene is proof enough of their dedication.

"In New Zealand it's not easy to be professional, and therefore there are not the same pressures when you get there. There is no way you're going to make money or become a superstar. You have to do it for the love of it," states Marion.

Having succeeded in that atmosphere and now having carved a niche into the cut-throat super-monotonous Melbourne pub circuit, they are anxious to move on once again. "It's time to get out of Melbourne," states Robbie. "We want to get onto the concert stage fairly quickly." Um, that's nice boys, but so do 95% of the bands in Australia.

But RHP are confident that they can, and will do it. Marion reasons, "We have a big enough range of material to complement a wide variety of bands, so we can make it a musically cohesive evening."

In New Zealand, RHP supported people such as J.J. Cale, Canned Heat, Flo and Eddie and Country Joe McDonald.

Right now, however, all hopes are pinned on the album. The music they play in concert has progressed somewhat from the album, but the band are all extremely pleased with it. Marion said, "I was quite excited when I heard it. The accent has changed a little since then, though. We've gained maturity, we're more integrated and on a lot closer wavelength with each other. I've been reading a book by Segovia and one part which really stood out said *'You think you are developing all the time, but what you do best comes naturally' ".*

In the near future Red Hot Peppers hope to be coming naturally all over Australia.

RADIO BIRDMAN GOES DOWN IN FLAMES?

Clark Kent

Radio Birdman's departure for England turned out to be one of those *um, we might be going this week but we haven't heard from our manager yet* affairs.

The weeks passed and finally, Radio Birdman did leave Sydney. From initial reports though, they maybe needn't have bothered. The English y'see, aren't exactly overawed by the group that scored positions in every available category in last year's RAM Rock Poll.

First up, their single *What Gives* got slated in the leading music papers, then there was an apparent problem of how to stop people from walking out of their early gigs.

In fact, when the Flamin' Groovies British tour was announced, it was mentioned that the American band would be bringing "their Sire Records stable-mates, Radio Birdman, over." Problem is, Radio Birdman had *already* been gigging in the U.K. for a something like a month.

ALI BLOWS IT

First, Evel Knievel blew it when he beat up a writer and got himself locked up. The Ideal toy company lost mucho money when the folks turned off Evel Knievel stunt bikes and other such goodies for the kids.

Is Muhammad Ali headed in the same direction?

After years in the ring, he had become a marketable commodity for kids.

A television company made a children's cartoon dealing with the adventures of the boxer, and National Periodical Publications came out with a massive *Superman Vs Muhammad Ali* comic book in which Superman fights Ali without his superhuman powers and gets pummelled into the canvas.

The celebrity exploitation business was really taking off.

But what should an ungrateful Ali do except lose his title to Leon Spinks.

Will Ali show his face in public again? Will Superman take out the title?? Can the kids tolerate a loser???

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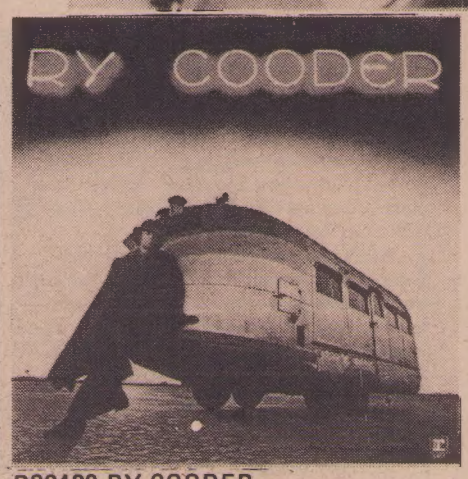

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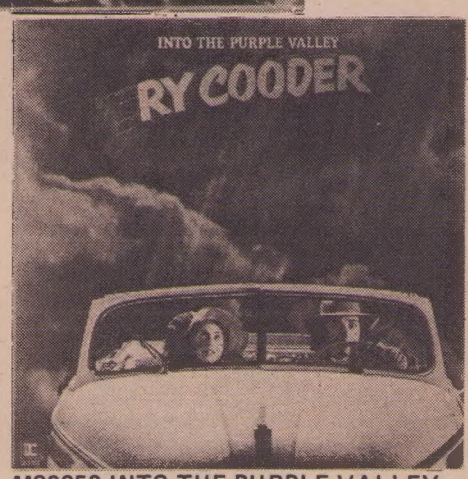

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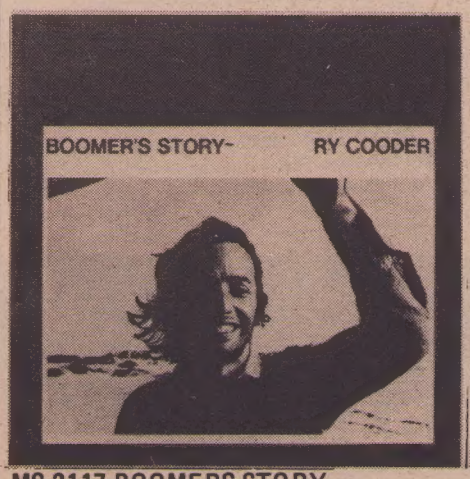

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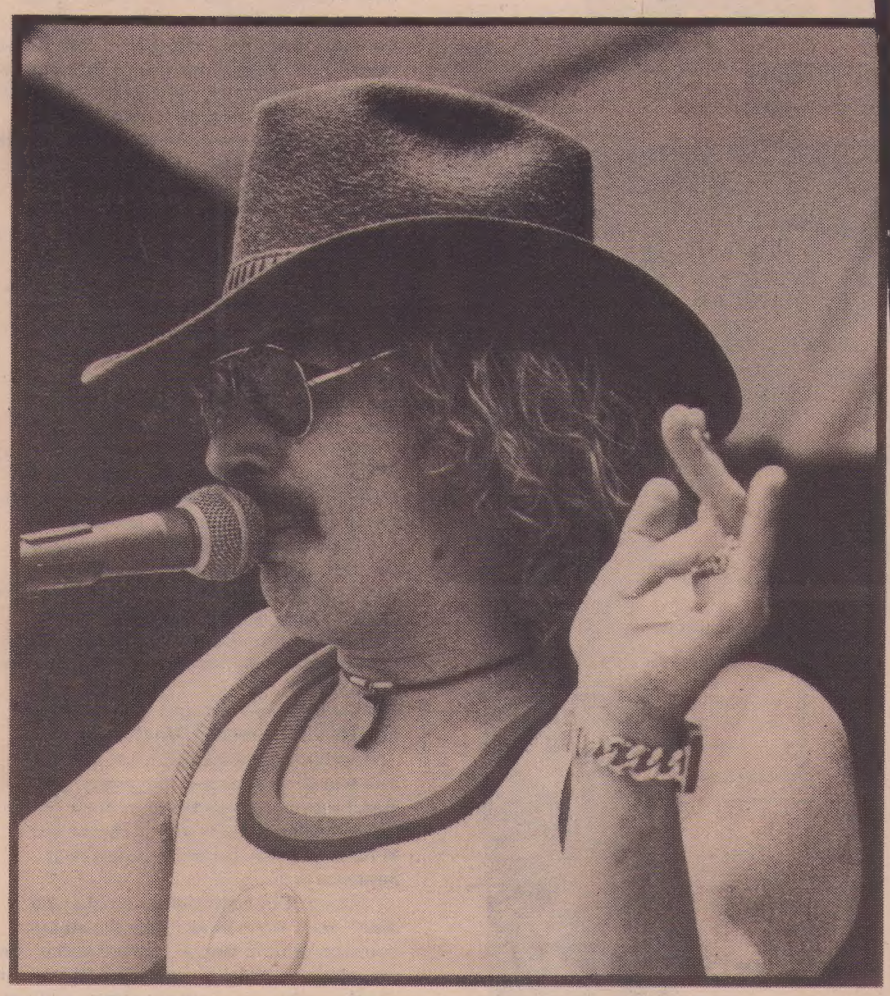
JEFF ST. JOHN

THE DADDY OF OZ ROCK IS ABOUT TO SURPRISE YOU



Annie Burton

There is always something special involved when you hear the just completed product of recorded labour. A finished tape in a semi-darkened recording studio always has an indefinable aural sparkle; maybe it's the contact excitement coming from the people who've made the thing.

In this case, it certainly wasn't the otherworldly atmosphere of a dimly lit recording studio that produced that special thing. A brisk afternoon light penetrated the St. John family flat with not a whiff of mystery, but the brand new pressing of Jeff St. John's brand new album still managed that extra exciting edge. Maybe it's because St. John himself was so all-fired excited himself, near beside himself with pleasure at the standard of the record cut—as excellent, crystalline and sharp as a blade on his carefully adjusted sound system.

The album itself leaves an overwhelming impression of power; solid, brassy power, despite being liberally sprinkled with beautiful ballads. His next single, for instance, is a perfectly exquisite version of Sanford-Townsend's *Starbrite;* when you get to hear it, all the nine voices in the chorus are Jeff St. John's, honest, even those high, distinctly feminine tones you'd swear were a woman's.

The album's material is all cover versions, with the exception of one song of St. John's, a raunchy, guaranteed-to-embarrass-the-journalist track about a reporter's half-wittedness, featuring a venomous chorus: *I think about the questions/After the show/ If I have to tell you/You'll never know.* Ahem. Jeff kindly assures me that he didn't mean *all* journalists, "but boy, I've met some fuckwits in my time." In a career spanning thirteen years plus, I bet he has.

The rest of the sources are diverse. There's one song by Ray Burton, *The Dreamer,* and "the comedy relief", track, "an R-rated Gospel song" about a beautiful tent preacher who teaches a young man a considerably more interesting version of the Resurrection than the usual one.

It's taken just over a year to make this set, in two different studios, Trafalgar and Albert's, with two different producers, John Sayers and Richard Batchens (best known for his work with Richard Clapton; Batchens handles St. John in a completely different fashion, but with just as much sympathy as he does Clapton). The time and care shows—the arrangements, the playing standard of the musicians and the care with which they've been chosen for each particular song (a different collection of players was used for each). But this is getting too close to gush; just believe it's a very good album and hear it for yourself.

Surprisingly, considering the length of Jeff St. John's career, it's only his fourth studio album. There have been two compilations, the most recent being *Jeff St. John—Survivor, 1965-75,* which tends to make him sound as though he curled up and died three years ago.

He didn't. But what happened to a planned three month tour using the outdoor truck-tray-as-concert-stage that was supposed to happen last year? "Well," says Jeff, looking careful, "we actually *did* do *a week. . .* It came down to a matter of er, weather, really. Four of the nights we tried to do were rained out. The promoter wasn't together—no long-range weather forecasts." Which, one gathers, was only one of many promotional faults. That debacle was abandoned, but another tour, indoors this time, has been set up. Jeff's chosen a "hand-picked" group of independent musicians, brought together for the specific purpose of backing him.

While the album was being played and gloated over, Jeff's daughter, Jessica, had quietly been refusing to take a nap in her cot. Her father says she's a very good picker of likely hits; she liked *A Fool In Love* but not *Rock 'n' Roll Man,* and sure enough, the latter didn't provide half the chart action of the former. Jessica demonstrates her method of hit picking during the B side of *Starbrite,* a rip snorting hard rocker called *Knock' Em Dead Kid;* it's a raging mixture of Kiss, Black Oak Arkansas and Jeff St. John, Jeff cackled, as he put it on the turntable, saying, "It's really nice to keep people guessing where you're coming from: Jessica favours it with enthusiastic sideways rocking.

Cute, sure, but also bang on the beat.

The backing sounds sorta familiar though. . . hold on! It's AC/DC!!

Jeff St. John sure knows how to bridge the rock 'n' roll generation gap.

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER WITH NIK COHN

Clark Kent

Nik Cohn will probably go down as the greatest rock writer of the sixties. Much of that credit is due to his book *Awopbopa-lambamboom* which is possibly the most incisive guide to the music of the period, in both style and vision. Then, in the '70's, he wrote *Rock Dreams.*

Today, his greatest claim to fame is *Saturday Night Fever,* the disco film starring John Travolta that was inspired by an article he wrote called *Bible Rites On The New Saturday Night.*

Cohn, an Englishman by birth, moved to New York a couple of years ago. With the assumption that disco was the working class music of America, Cohn went into the Bay Ridge area of Brooklyn and wrote the story, borrowing characters and attitudes from those he had experienced at the height of the English mod scene in '64.

Within twelve hours of the article's publication, Robert Stigwood was on the phone to him, discussing ideas for a movie. What eventuated was one helluva box office hit.

Says Cohn, "From the start I've felt that disco music was the most exciting development in Seventies pop music. The new Bee Gee's songs like *Jive Talkin', Nights On Broadway* etc. were better records than new Neil Young or new Bob Dylan—which is a contradiction in terms, even.

"American people don't want to think in class terms. Disco music was the neighbourhood music. I discovered it was *THE* music. People wanted to explode, not sit on cushions as a pop critic.

"Tony and the Faces are actually mods in everything, except for the dances. In fact, I even borrowed the name Faces from the days when the Who started in England. Their manager had a group called The Hundred Faces show up at every gig.

"I substituted the same values, the same ambition—or should I say lack of ambition. The basic feeling is the same—that there is nothing except to wait for The Night. No use in planning, nothing was going to come of it."

Saturday Night Fever, while capturing the virtual futility of a lifestyle in which Saturday Night at the local disco is the highpoint, differs from Cohn's original manuscript in that it features a *positive* outcome. Cohn wasn't so optimistic.

"I don't object to the film's ending," says Cohn.

"The essential difference of course, is that the real guy does *not* get out of the neighbourhood, 99 out of 100 times he doesn't."

THE STATE OF KANSAS

IT'S THE WORLD'S NEW CAPITAL OF POMP-ROCK

IAN BIRCH

Two days in Las Vegas and your grip on sanity begins to slip. You can even buy a T-shirt there emblazoned with the gem: "I've given up looking for the truth. Now I'm looking for a good fantasy." Honestly.

A gigantic Babylon bordered by desert, it specialises in one obsession only. Gambling. Absolutely everything is geared to this. You can play keno (de luxe bingo) while you eat dirt-cheap T-bone steaks (another dangling carrot).

There are no clocks because that old-fashioned division between day and night simply doesn't apply. Nobody cares because nothing stops.

The hotels themselves are massive life-support systems where virtually every whim can be accommodated without having to venture outside. No wonder Howard Hughes took up residence there for so long. The American dream (gambling is only free enterprise folded into luck after all?) bloated into an addictive nightmare.

Kansas (the band) were staying in the Aladdin. Their gig that night was also in the Aladdin. See what I mean about the sheer sizes? The Aladdin's theatre for performing arts holds 8,500 people. The theatre was tucked in the hotel's basement. A mere bagatelle.

It was the last date on a mammoth US trek (supported, incidentally, by the wonderful Cheap Trick) and they went down the proverbial storm, the Vegans demanding encore after encore.

This may surprise you, as Kansas mean less than zero here. However, in the States, they are box office picks-to-click.

Their last but one album, *Leftoverture*, has gone double platinum (two million sales) and spawned a smash single in the cut *Carry On Wayward Son*. The latest, *Point Of Know Return*, turned gold (500,000 sales) without trying.

And this commercial commotion has upped sales on their first three, *Kansas, Song For America* and *Masque*.

Some background information: six components who found each other in Topeka, Kansas, around 1972. Or rather met up again, as most of them had been High School buddies.

Drummer Phil Ehart set the ball in motion when he returned from a singularly unsuccessful three-month stint in Britain. A local supergroup evolved: himself, Steve Walsh (vocals/keyboards/songwriting), Rich Williams (guitars), Dave Hope (bass), Robby Steinhardt (vocals/violin and a classically trained musician) plus Kerry Livgren (everything from guitars, piano, synthesizer, organ to songwriting).

As Topeka "had absolutely no musical tradition," they set about a style that combined a torrent of mainly English influences. Pomp rock in fact, in the grandiose tradition of bands like ELO, Yes, Genesis, Gentle Giant, Deep Purple and King Crimson.

Monolithic chord structures meshed with complex textures, dramatic harmonies, lengthy improvisations, spiritually swash-buckling lyrics and hard-core instrumental prowess. It will either turn your stomach or hook you from the first note.

The next step was a contract. They hawked around a demo tape of five deliberately commercial numbers which finally found a sympathetic ear in the offices of Don Kirshner, host of the famed Rock Concert show and erstwhile Monkees puppeteer.

He was on the verge of starting his own label and sent musical director Wally Gold to investigate. Thereupon Kansas had a contract and the following March ('74) released the first album, produced by Gold, whose previous credit had been, of all things, Barbra Streisand.

The next few years saw gruelling support-band status to the likes of Queen, Foghat, Jefferson Starship and Bad Company. The latter resulted in management shenanigans when the BC lawyer pleasantly informed the band that they had gone over their allotted time by *TWO MINUTES* and that if it happened again, they would be off the tour. Kansas went on earlier.

The set went through the inevitable modifications. Harmonies became more dominant, songs were shortened, visuals (yes, dry ice and strobes) added, Dave relinquished singing lead and Rich traded in his dungarees for a natty white tuxedo.

At one point a roadie would come on in only a raincoat, drop it and reveal to the world his superstructure. But throughout, the band consciously tried to be a democracy where no one was given special importance.

Steve Walsh takes up the tale. "From the very beginning we've had full rein in our career. In some ways, that's bad, but mostly it's been completely in our favour because there's no overnight anything.

"We were not going to prostitute ourselves in any way. We were not going to cut our songs down. We tried to release *Song For America* as a single—a 12-minute song. It was released in a three-minute version. . .

"It was so stupid-sounding but the record company were aching for a single. I don't blame them. In this country, if you don't sell a gold album, you don't make ends meet.

"In the end, the only thing that justifies it is if you're good live. If you put on an album and it's a great album and you can't support it live, that is a big letdown."

And judging by the audience reaction the two nights I saw them, Kansas are no let-down. Broadly, the set is taken from the last two albums but the material is re-shaped/re-vamped/re-suscitated accordingly. Like running a solo spot (and that includes a drum solo).

The precision of the albums is given a quickfire and *EMOTIONAL* context. That is hyperimportant for Kansas. Rich, Phil and Dave (a near-chain smoker on stage) retire to concentrate on their instruments while Kerry, in curious black-satin kimono kit, scuttles between banks of hardware.

Steve: "For eight dollars a ticket we didn't want to go in and play the album non-stop or bore people to death either. So we somewhat did a compromise. We do a lot of effects that aren't on the album, mainly just to give the people something more."

The obvious broadside to fire at Kansas is of *pretension*. The arrangements, and lyrics especially, are knee-deep in layers of Cecil B. DeMille chintzy grandeur.

There are key words and themes like eyes, old men, blind men, childhood, the natural elements, endless questioning and a kind of patriotic zeal for the motherland.

But to take all this too seriously is (I think) to misunderstand pomp rock. The genre is all about cosmic adventure stories, Marvel Comic Morality Plays where the instruments as well as the words plunge you into a hectic never-never land.

The lead guitarist, armed with the shield of truth, fights the dragon of deceit or maybe subverted technology. It's a take-it-or-leave-it situation.

"We are always accused of being contrived," continued Steve. "Most of the people who have knocked us for having a set have been people used to the likes of the Allman Brothers and stuff, the completely spontaneous jam sessions.

"Hell, we went through that years ago where the lead guitar used to play for half-an-hour. But how fair is that to the guy who has paid to see the goddam show?"

Pomp rock is mushrooming in the States and Kansas are following in the meteoric footsteps of bands like Boston and Styx.

One odd aspect of Kansas is the amount of religious mail they seem to attract. Steve is baffled. "People are trying to save us! The Mormons a few weeks back told me I was going to die in my selfishness. We've just given a whole bunch of money to the Allen Town flood fund and an old folks' home in Salt Lake City, and I think we're going to sponsor a scholarship in Kansas University not too long from now. We're always thinking of things like that."

Jolly nice, chaps.

"Hi! We're Kansas . . . and just before our violin player leaps over the amplifiers, we'd like to give a brief history of British Technoflash Rock 'n' Roll." (Pic Michael Putland/LFI).

U-TURN FOR A NEW DIRECTION

Annie Burton

When two members of U-Turn hove into view through the office door, my stomach did an instant elevation to somewhere under my jawbone. OK, so I wrote an uncharitable record review of U-Turn's first album; *uncharitable* hell, it was venomous. But I paid, didn't I? A girlfriend of a, by then, ex-U-Turn person, (the female had also sung back-up on the album, unbeknownst to me) slapped me silly in the Bondi Lifesaver one night. Surely Chris Fitz-Gibbon (easy to pick because of his streaked cockerel haircut) and George Steffe hadn't come to finish the job off properly?

But, apart from a few mildly voiced references to my *kind* review, the gents were civilized to a fault. It seems that U-Turn broke up, then re-formed, minus manager, quasi-Bay City Rollers uniforms and all but Steffe and Fitz-Gibbon from the original line-up. The other three members of the new U-Turn are from a band called Redwood—Steve Smith, lead guitar, Dave Williams, bass, and Glen MCoy, drums.

The band will be touring on the strength of *One Day Love Affair*, their current single. It was released just as the band broke up; despite the temporary absence of band to promote it, it's receiving moderate exposure. Another ah, more carefully considered album is planned. Chris Fitz-Gibbon says the new band is aiming at an older audience, hence the removal of the jumpsuit uniforms and a penchant for more adult musical material.

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TMG

Saga of the long distance road runners

By: Andrew McMillan

In a third floor rehearsal studio on the sleazy side of Sydney Ted Mulry leans against a mellotron, bass guitar across his lap. The pale complexion seems undaunted by the dimness of the lighting and his eyes are clear. The hair is cropped, the poise relaxed and the Lancashire accent still vaguely evident.

Despite his years, the occasional over-indulgence in Scotch, the nightly grind and seemingly endless raging, Ted Mulry still comes up looking relatively fresh. Which is a bit surprising really, when you consider that this is the roadworker who turned balladeer and wrote hits like *Julia, Memories* and *Falling In Love Again* in the early '70s. Since then of course, he's had numbers like *Jump In My Car, Crazy, Steppin' Out, Let's Do It Again, My Little Girl* and the current TMG single *Lazy Eyes.* Yeah, it seems as though he's always been around. But then, so he should be. After all, he hasn't lost the knack of wringing a melody out of the most basic material. And, with few exceptions, it's been strong and polished like a blood agate fresh from its fifth week in the tumbler.

BUT THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST, INNIT?

Yeah, whaddever happened to the Ted Mulry Gang? They broke up, didn't they? Actually, you could be forgiven such thoughts. After the gruelling TMG tour of late last year, one of the teenzines ran a sob story to the effect that the end was nigh the boys were breaking up. And very little has been heard of them since. Except of course, a *Best Of* compilation album.

Fact is, TMG took a long awaited holiday, began recording their new album and toured New Zealand.

Today, they're back in Oz rehearsing some new material for the album. In this studio actually. Ted's 'ere. Gary Dickson's 'ere. Les Hall's 'ere. See?! Hold on! Where's Herm? Herm Kovac, the drummer! Oh yeah, he's here too, perched behind his polished black kit.

Like Dickson, Herm isn't saying much tonight. And, if you were to believe everything Ted 'n' Les say, Herm doesn't get much time to talk at all. 'Cos he spends his time throwing up. Maybe that's why he doesn't exactly fit the bill as an archetypal skin basher. Y'see, Herman suffers from car sickness. "Most times 'e goes over t' Gazza's, th' drive's too much for 'im. When 'e gets there, 'e throws up. An' Gazza's dog jus' stands there an' watches 'im!" Laughter engulfs the tape and I wonder whether Mr. Kovac might just have a drinking problem. But no, he never touches anything harder than mineral water.

"Les 'ad some vodka in New Zealand," Ted chips in. "Jeeze, made me feel like the father of a new baby, it did. Here was my boy, takin' 'is first drink. Made me feel proud, it did!"

As a public relations venture (and a drinking initiation) the New Zealand trip, their first, went down well. The crowds were good, record sales picked up, but the band ran into trouble with local bookings. "We were either too loud or too rude," says a disgruntled Mulry. "It was like here six years ago with that sorta shit. *You can't say fuck on stage here,"* he mimics. The band say they returned home three weeks early to work on a new album rather than put up with the petty complaints.

SIX YEARS ON AND ON AND. . .

Ted Mulry's guitar case is one of those metallic silver jobs plastered with fading stickers and dents.

It's just your average run o' the mill guitar case really. Nothin' special. Like most, it's a bit battered around the edges, and most of the stickers have seen better days.

" 'Ullo darling . . . what yer doing arfta the show . . . like to come up and see my photo collection after the rest of the boys have 'ad their hot milk and gone ter bed?"

The 2NX stickers though, are new and unscratched and Ted doesn't mind advertising the station. 2NX Newcastle was the station that picked up on the band's first single *Jump In My Car* in mid '75 and pushed it into the national charts, giving the Gang their first major break.

The *Steppin' Out* tour stickers are, on the other hand, looking very seedy indeed. Remnants of that hectic *off one tour and onto another* period of '76. The stickers are decaying, the once bright yellows and greens fading into pink.

Basically, it's your *seen one you seen 'em all* guitar case that's seen a lotta miles on some of the longest tours undertaken in this country. It's been there on the bad nights and the good, the empty halls and the full.

Let's face it, TMG have been slogging it out for almost six years now. For the past two and a half, they've been on the road almost constantly. They've covered just about every town in Oz, they've had a series of hit singles, and their album sales have ranged from moderate to good.

The first time I saw them, as the Ted Mulry Gang, was on January 2, 1976. *Jump In My Car* had just broken into the Brisbane charts, three hundred kids rolled into the five thousand seat Festival Hall to see them with the top local bands and some mob featuring a *never 'eard of 'im* guitarist called Kevin Borich. The Gang played a godawful set and the promoter absconded to New Zealand with the gate money.

Later that year, they toured with Sherbet, Hush and John Paul Young before embarking on their own headlining jaunts across the country. Since then, they have been a consistent crowd puller. And yet, they've never quite broken out of that second division. Mind you, TMG have been more consistent hit-makers than most of the prominent first division groups. So perhaps my classification is a bit suspect.

Cartainly, of *all* the bands that were swirling in the maelstrom of '75/76 (Sherbet, Skyhooks, Hush, AC/DC, OI '55, J.P.Y.'s All Stars et al) TMG is the only group to have survived without at least one personnel change. Some would say the *music* hasn't changed either. But it has. As Les explains:

"With the new album, we've altered our style for the simple reason that we've had several New Zealand releases, we've got a South African release coming up and also a Canadian release in the pipeline. So what we're looking at now is something that's viable to those markets.

"Now this isn't to say that we've about turned and changed direction totally. What we're doing is broadening, just as we did with *Jamaica Rum.* It was us, but it didn't sound like us. It was a different aspect."

With the new album, the band have had more time to work on the construction of each song, whereas in the past, their releases have been rushed to fit in with tour commitments.

"It still sounds like us, but a lot of the familiar rhythm patterns that we used in a lot of our previous stuff, we've tried to keep down to a minimum. We've tried to get more variety into it, including the use of strings on the album, as well as brass and acoustic tracks."

"I tell ya wot," enthuses Ted, "if they can hear any Status Quo on this one there's somethin' wrong."

Well well. That's all very nice, but um, how's the new material going to show up live when the punters are expecting a traditional TMG rock 'n' roll show?

"That's something we've been worrying about actually," Les Hall admits. "But there are still enough beefy rock 'n' roll tracks in there to do live."

ON TOUR. . . DISTURBIN' THE PEACE

On April 26, TMG will be setting out on the longest tour ever undertaken by any act in this country—*seventy four venues in ninety six days.*

Starting off in Tasmania, they cover Victoria and South Australia. That's the warm up. The fun starts in the south west corner of W.A. With support band Feather, TMG'll be heading up the West Australian coast, around to Darwin, down to Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, across to Mt. Isa, up to Cairns and then down through Queensland and New South Wales for the home run. "It'll *really* be a national tour," says Les.

"We're doin' a couple'a towns that 'aven't got names yet," Ted chimes in. "But we intend t' name 'em while we're there."

Talking to these guys, you could get the impression that this exercise is just another excuse for a three month rage. I mean, the trademarks are there. On the face of it anyway, pre-tour thoughts are uttered with frivolous *hey we're gonna have a party* gaiety. And yet, TMG are taking a massive gamble.

Sure, they should have a clear run through the country; the days of Hush barely pulling an audience in some outback town three days after Sherbet and J.P.Y. mowed the punters down on *their* three month tour are long gone. There just aren't *that* many local rockers *able* to mount a national tour today. But the gamble is still there. Look at TMG's outlay for this tour.

They've bought a new truck, a new coach customised with aircraft seats and bunks, and for the roadies, a fully equipped camper-van with six bunks. And they're taking their own electrician along. The key word is *independent.* Independent of the usual tour hassles of coach companies, hire cars, *thrashed for fifty thousand miles* trucks, unreliable local servicemen and. . .

"It's such a good feeling to go out on the road and know that you don't have to worry about anything," says Hall.

"With the preparation for this tour, we're drawing from the experience of all the things that have gone wrong before. This time, we are prepared."

Now all that's left is prayers for fine weather and a hit single. And of course, four guys hoping the punters turn out.

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April 22 Manly Vale Hotel
April [illegible] Fraternity Club, Wollongong
April [illegible] Macquarie University (afternoon)
War N Peace, Parramatta
April 2[illegible] Bondi Lifesaver
April [illegible] Northern Suburbs Leagues Club, Wollongong
[illegible] Brisbane (venue to be announced)
Patches, Brisbane
[illegible] Queensland University
[illegible]th The Cabbage Patch, Coolangatta
[illegible]th Brothers Rugby Leagues Club, Brisbane
[illegible]th Bayside Hotel, Geelong
May [illegible]th [illegible]
[illegible]
Wharf [illegible]
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[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
May 12th [illegible]
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ON ASYLUM RECORDS & TAPES

KITCHIE-KOO & GURGLE GUB THAT'S SOME BABY TALK

HERE'S SOME MORE.

CRADLE-ROCKER: HARRY DOHERTY

"Money talks—so listen to it." (10cc—*Art For Art's Sake.*— Half a million bucks sez the Babys are gonna be big. Should you want to argue with that kind of bread—and many do—please take the matter up with Chrysalis Records.

It is an inescapable fact of life for the Babys that they are very much *a product.* Placing to one side for the moment the band's obvious musical qualities, consider the politics behind their creation.

The band was virtually unknown when it signed to Chrysalis. The plan was *not* to start at the bottom and work up, but to open their account on the fringe of the big time, make a quick entry, and grow from there.

Rod Stewart, Queen, Bad Company . . . the Babys. They would comfortably fit in with the big boys. What they hadn't reckoned for was the New Wave, which unsettled the plans of any mogul who thought he had the music business and the fans sussed out. Nothing is a foregone conclusion.

But there were contingency plans for that too. Chrysalis advised the Babys their future would be brighter in the more predictable American market, and the band moved to Los Anges, suffering a traumatic break-up with their English manager soon after emigrating.

Even there they landed on their feet, and eventually they wound up being managed by the same powerful office that handles the affairs of Neil Young and Joni Mitchell—the Elliott Roberts Management.

When the Babys finally made their American concert debut, it was not as support on a major tour or building through the clubs, as bands usually do. They headed straight for the big theatres; the Palladium in New York, the Tower in Philadelphia, the Orpheum in Boston and so on across the States.

The record company and management even subsidised it with tickets in some areas costing less than a dollar. Backed by a huge promotional campaign, the Babys usually pulled in a decent crowd.

Accompanying all this was a carefully manicured image of youthfulness, verging on teenybop, that was designed to turn on impressionable girls. The cover of their first album showed four healthy boys; the cover on the second had four flash posers up to their eye-balls in make-up.

You will have noticed that the music hasn't been mentioned once, and that's unfortunate, since it is quite capable of standing on its own without all the side-salad.

You are probably familiar with the band's wonderful single, *Isn't It Time,* and there are more than enough highlights on both of their albums, *The Babys* and *Broken Heart,* to show that *Isn't It Time* is no fluke. Tracks like *Give Me Your Love* and *Golden Mile.*

The band members themselves are good musicians. John Waite is one of the best young vocalists to emerge in recent years—his reading of *Isn't It Time* and the hypnotic performance on *Golden Mile* confirms that—while he combines with drummer Tony Brock to form a solid, and different, rhythm section. Brock's drumming style leaves intelligent spaces between beats, but keyboard player and second guitarist Mike Corby has yet to realise his potential on keyboards, from which he's distracted by posing outfront like an elastic Jimmy Page.

With someone so extrovert as Corby there is a chance of underestimating the band's lead guitarist Walt Stocker, a player in the typical British blues mould with a style too close for comfort to Paul Kossoff.

I wait patiently for the day when all the music business paraphernalia is thrown out the window and they can concentrate on producing their best music. Some of *The Babys* worked, as did some of *Broken Heart,* but there is an unfortunate inconsistency.

Yet *Broken Heart* and *Isn't It Time* both went high in the American charts, the single going into the top ten and the album finally resting outside the top 30. The band's recent Christmas holiday provided the opportunity to discuss their brief but eventful career.

"With America," Waite explains, "we went in February '77 on a promotional visit and we were accepted right away. You go where there's an audience. We had a choice and we cashed in."

Both are reluctant to accept that Chrysalis played a major part in directing their career. "Not at all," Brock states naively; but Waite takes a more considered opinion: "Only as much as they put us in a situation to play. We are the direction. The band is the product. We are the thing the people will hear and see. It's all business behind that and I don't wanna know about that."

I argue that Chrysalis presented an image that was as close to teenybops as they could get without stating the fact. They agreed, but "we've destroyed that myth"—a reference to on-tour antics. "It was a millstone around our necks," Waite says, "but it is also what got us noticed in the first place, so we shouldn't really knock it.

"It's part of the problem of being called the Babys. It's nobody's idea of fun being a teenybopper. I don't wanna be a teenybopper. I hope we're not even close to it, but once you present an image to the public it's a real fight to lose it."

So why even present the image?

"We've got no say in it. When you're starving and hanging around London and looking for a break, and somebody says they're going to give you a record deal, you go and you play and you do your best. You're so caught up in the work side of it that you don't wanna know about business. You leave it to somebody else.

"In our case, we unfortunately kinda got hyped. We got a teen image. You hear the music, and to me at least it's nothing like teenybop music. There's a gigantic contradiction going on. People who haven't heard the band just dismiss it because they think it's a teeny band."

With the American success, I presumed that the Babys would be capable of levelling out the discrepancies. The comment elicits a stony silence. "We always have," Waite responds forcefully. "We have never been dictated to. In fact, if anybody puts my back up, I always do the opposite.

"That's my nature. I can't stand being talked down to. Chrysalis never really tried that with us. They always had enough faith in the band to let us go our own way."

Then Babys joined the Young-Mitchell stable, with Roberts' Look-Out Management handling their affairs. They laugh at the thought of it. Neil Young, Joni Mitchell . . . *and the Babys.* It somehow doesn't sound right. "Madness," says Waite. "It's a crazy situation." Why did they join Look-Out? "They were good people, and they've never been sued. No one has ever sued them. That says a lot."

They are, of course, praying (you can take that literally) that audiences outside the USA will give them a break and listen to the music. As I said earlier, there's nothing on their two albums to be particularly ashamed of. Waite and Brock know that too, and chat brashly about progressions from the first to the second, and how the third will be a killer.

Waite: "I think the third one is going to be really radical. It's going to shock people. The second one surprised people. The next one will be full of balls, just screaming rock 'n' roll. I can't really listen to *Broken Heart.* I prefer the first album.

"What do I mean by radical? Just more committed. We've made a giant step forward from the beginning. The only way to go forward from that is to go back to the roots and work off that again. There's a lot of different sides to the Babys on the second album, and I think on the third album we've got to be more identifiable with the sound. The more I listen to the new wave bands, the more I want to play really *raw* feeling, without just playing A all night. I really want to do a live album, but it's too soon. I want something that's really spontaneous. Something desperate.

"As I say, we've been misrepresented. In fact, one of the reasons for the break with our last manager was that he really wanted us to keep off the stage, keep promoting us with blurb and not do any gigs. We were screaming to play. We wanted to go out and earn our wings and be a real band and get there the right way, the honest way. But you can't knock the record company for helping you."

SIDEWINDER

VIOLIN-SENSE ON STAGE

Andrea Jones

Ask a pub crowd what they remember of Sidewinder and, to a person, they'll say *"the violinist".*

Richard Lee, violinist extraordinaire, is unquestionably the central pivot of Sidewinder. His dramatic stage presence and amazing command over his instrument demand the audience's complete attention.

On stage, his imposing persona makes the rest of the band pale into insignificance. There is no way they can match his high voltage operation, so mostly they become no more than a back-drop for his musical rantings.

But make no mistake, this is not some airy-fairy folk-fiddle he is wielding. Violin tucked firmly into his clavicle, he hacks at the strings with ferocious dexterity, wrenching out the gutsiest guitar-like riffs which sound like an agonising pneumatic drill, or, alternatively, he renders sweet melodies. 15 years of classical training has Richard a mastery over his instrument.

Sidewinder began their slog around the Melbourne pubs about 14 months ago. The group was formed by Richard and vocalist Dave Castles. Dave's strong and clear voice is the one thing that refuses to be overshadowed by Richard's violin.

Sidewinder were originally an r&b band, but with the infusion of new members came new ideas and styles. Now the band plays mainly heavy rock. Richard likes to describe their music as "rhythm and blues with classical overtones". But don't be put off by the word "classical". Symphonic rock has no place in their repertoire.

Richard Lee creates a memorable punk violin moment in some dingy dive. (Pic. Geraldine Parle).

The band say they're aiming at the U.S. world market. At the moment they are spreading their word through an interstate pub and campus tour.

The week before they started the tour I caught them at Martinis. The audience was surprisingly rock and roll oriented for a Martinis crowd which, as Dave puts it, "usually appreciate more blues and intellectual music." The large crowd left little room for breathing but the sweaty atmosphere was conducive to a good night of rock and roll.

One of Sidewinder's most impressive songs that night was *Heartache.* It provided an excellent showcase for Richard's many styles. It starts with a heart-rending monologue from Dave, accompanied by a home-sweet-home style melodramatic violin passage. His vitar (trade name for his versatile guitar-sounding violin) sounds so like a guitar that lead guitarist Big A becomes purely background. In fact, guitarist Big A turns his back on the audience and rattles off guitar mumblings to himself.

Sanctuary was another memorable raunchy number that had Richard literally hacking at his strings to a steady cymbal and drum back-beat.

But for each of the songs, the impression remained pretty much the same—that of this amazing violin man.

This is the sort of band that could result in disaster on vinyl. At the moment their brand of rock is a live experience—one that you can't take home with you, but one which will ensure Sidewinder much live work for as long as they want.

THE COUNT OF MONTREUX

BRYAN FERRY JUST LOVES THOSE PRISON WALLS

PAUL RAMBALI DOESN'T MIND

Bryan Ferry's breakfast has just arrived . . . at 11 pm.

This has nothing to do with slack hotel room service, nor has the former lounge lizard become a creature of solely nocturnal habits, it's simply the result of running overtime at the Montreux Casino studio, and being forced to work the night shift while chart papsters Smokie stay strictly nine to five.

Ferry has been in Montreux for the past three months, working on his new album. He has been residing at the Montreux Palace, Bellevue Suite, second floor, which affords an expansive view of Lake Geneva, surrounding snow-capped mountains, and the town of Montreux.

Montreux in the wintertime is a ghost town. You walk the length of the town and the impression is one of quiet and dreary local life surrounded by huge ornate, opulent hotels waiting for the next visiting conference or the start of the tourist season.

The Montreux Palace Hotel is the largest of them all. It's like the grandest sea-front hotel on any crumbling British coastal resort, but bigger, and not yet frayed. It is vast, melancholy, and very empty. Bryan Ferry, his manager, and his 'media consultant' are the only guests.

It almost seems like some grand cosmic joke to find Ferry—whom the media would have you and I believe is a natural for such elegant habitats—alone, and perhaps a little disconsolate. And to find the elegance of his surroundings so utterly empty. . . and finally, worthless.

The irony of the situation is almost unbearable.

As far as reputations go, Bryan Ferry's is not one I would envy. He skyrocketed into popular consciousness with such a fierce grasp on what would capture the imagination of the time that the sureness of his moves seemed almost uncanny.

For a time his incessant flirting with the persona he created was audacious and amusing. Remember, for instance, the English famous gaucho outfit he sprang on followers of his dress sense a few years back?

The bubble grew bigger and bigger. He made the cover of *Men In Vogue* and became the watchword of the fashion industry, thanks in part to his record company press officer of the time having worked for various fashion designers, and having, as they say, the right connections.

But inherent in the nature of Ferry's bubble was the fact that many were all too willing to try to burst it.

On a critical level he was accused of abandoning the vision that shaped Roxy Music—bear in mind that it was Ferry and Andy Mackay who started the band, that Ferry always wrote the songs, and that Ferry, for better or worse, always saw the group as a vehicle for his songs, with contributions from the others involved—in return for easy solo pickings with cover versions of songs that were, his critics felt, a little too aware of their own falsity for comfort.

On other levels he was accused of rampant egomania. He supposely insisted on control of Roxy policy, was a hard taskmaster, and became insanely jealous of Eno's upstaging some of his thunder. His persona grew to be ridiculed as stupid glamourpuss posturing. . . And so it goes on.

came into pop music from a different angle." He paces ardly about the room as he talks, fumbling with the previous night's debris in search of a cigarette. "And a lot of people still resent me for it.

"That was one of the strengths, and also the cross that I was sort of impaled upon."

Ferry's genial and thoroughly British manner is, at times, stiflingly polite. But the insufferable adherant of the social graces and dilettante wit I had half expected to meet is nowhere in sight. Instead, he talks amiably, if a little nervously, his cultured accent giving way to traces of north country stock, and peppered with Americanisms no doubt picked up during his recent domicile in L.A.

"It was very strange for me because I'd never lived anywhere out of England for a long period of time before," he begins, his sentences trailing in the way they are prone to when you talk to someone a mere half-hour after they've woken up. "It has some very bad things about it in the sense that. . . you get a lot of bad people there, people who go there to make money, which can be a very evil thing when it's allied or involved with artistic pursuits, like movies.

"The whole Hollywood movie business stinks, it seems to me. A lot of people I met out there were movie people and it had a very bad feel about it. The whole product thing, return on investment and that kind of stuff, which fortunately the record business has not yet reached because of the relatively small sums involved."

There are those who would disagree. In recent years the American record business has turned into *an industry*, which means there is a lot of money to be made. And where there are big financial corporations ready to invest, and I could go on. . .

"I know, but the artist still has control because you *can* pay for your *own* record to be made"—he refers here to the fact that record companies offset recording costs against future royalties—"and I've always just made my records and then presented them to a record company and said *'here you are—sell that.'* Whereas in movies there are millions as opposed to thousands of dollars involved. Because there's all that money invested, they want to have all that control."

Has he ever felt the cold hand of investment forecast trying to guide his path? And what about the more insidious pressures of audience expectation?

Ferry, toying with his breakfast but now wide awake, admits to certain minor arguments with companies, "but as far as making a record is concerned, no.

"You feel pressure from an audience though. . . As long as you feel they're interested," he intones ominously.

"If you make an album every year, you want that to be an improvement or to build on what you did the previous year. Sometimes I've felt the audience has wanted me to stay in a certain position and repeat myself.

"Like with Roxy. When it dissolved I got some really awful letters from kids who felt I was *betraying* them. They don't realise that in order for you to keep up your own interest, which is so important, you have to keep experimenting and keep moving, trying out different things and working with different people, in different places. When The Beatles broke up, I felt sad, but now I perfectly understand how any group of people who work together on a creative basis have to move, because otherwise they'd die."

One gets the distinct impression that Ferry has delivered the main points of this soliloquy before. The reserve with which he answers most of my questions is gone for the moment.

"I'm really happy about the way things have turned out for me. I feel I've progressed to tell you the truth. Another thing is that when I started doing other people's material, it was a bit misunderstood. People thought, *'Oh no, he wants to make* commercial *records..'* For a start there's nothing wrong with records that are commercially successful, some of the greatest records have been terrible failures and others have been smash hits. But the reason was simply that there are certain kinds of songs I can't write, that I wanted to perform.

"If a song has a great tune and/or a great lyric, you think *'I'd like to do that song because I can do it in such and such a way'*. I've always had a wide taste, and disliked the thing of musical barriers. That happens in America a lot, and that's one of the reasons why it's so hard for me to get an audience there—because I'm not a country singer, nor an R&B singer, nor a European chanson merchant. I do all sorts of things.

"Another reason is that I do very emotional music, but in America they like to have their emotion smoothed down, with all the edges taken off," he adds ruefully. "In America they cringe, there's something that just doesn't get through. Your average British person will get into it much more because of something to do with temperament. Except your black American can get into emotional music. It knocks me out when I see black people in the audience, but very few of them know my music."

Broaching the subject of the difficulty both Roxy Music and he as a solo artist have had cracking America—the oddly isolated strongholds of Cleveland and Detroit excluded—seems like a convenient point to mention some of the rumours that have been floating around.

The fact that he was working with L.A. session stalwarts Waddy Watchel and Rick Marotta had, thanks to some active imaginations, evolved into the notion that he was working on a frantic, last-ditch attempt to make it in America; that he was using Linda Ronstadt's backing band (Watchel is Ronstadt's guitarist) to make a readily marketable country album, custom cut for FM airplay.

Ferry is visibly taken aback by the suggestion. And also a little affronted considering the remotest concession to Yankee taste on the album is Watchel's guitar. Rick Marotta aside, the remaining musicians are his regular crew and British to a man. But. . .

"People wanted me to go to America for this album, to work with one of the big-time American producers and to make an American album," he admits. "But I resisted all of the pressures to do that, which came from several directions *(one of them was his own management)*. I don't want to appear smug. . . I just worked very hard for three months under very strange circumstances.

"It's been like the army out here, all these guys bivouaced out. We're here for a long sustained period and our only reason for being here is the record. No distractions, the only thing we're thinking about is the record. It's been a really intense record because of that and because all the people who play on it. . . they're all nuts.

"That has all come out in the music. It's odd how records become the emotion that goes into them. . ."

How important is America to you? "To go back to the American producer thing. I couldn't think of anyone who could do what I wanted to do, so it's been produced as a teamwork thing; Waddy Watchel, Simon Puxley, Steve Nye and myself, with everybody throwing in ideas."

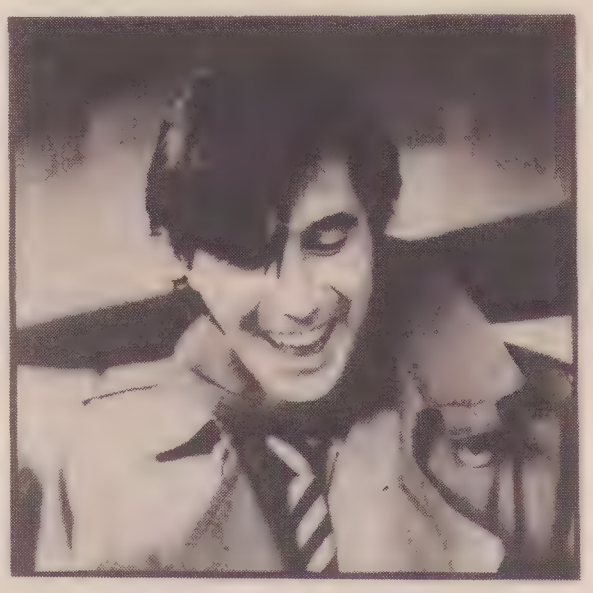
You didn't answer my question.

"Oh. Yeah, I'd like to be successful in America. . . No. I'd like my music to be successful in America. *That's* the rub."

Unlike most entrants in the rock arena, Ferry didn't give the idea of becoming a rock star any serious consideration until his mid to late twenties. The Washington, County Durham born miner's son had always been a music fan, but his vocational pursuits had till then been limited to the rarified atmosphere of painting, and to a lesser extent sculpture and art history. Plus, there were certain ghosts to be exorcised. . .

"I wanted to get my degree—BA Fine Arts—because as a kid I had been conditioned to the whole working class thing of education—or sport—being the only ways of salvation or escape into a better standard of living, and a better life generally. Self-improvement was a strong motivating force. I still believe in self-improvement, whether it's on an educational level or. . . everything, quality of life, which money can be a part of."

Though he had done some singing with local bands whilst at school and at college, university work made the more pressing demand. Still, after a few years he began to yearn for the sweaty smell of rock 'n' roll, and soon found himself by day "doing this very mental work," and by night, "slumming downtown with a R&B band."



"The trouble with the first was that I didn't feel I was putting enough passion into my work. And with the music there wasn't enough intelligence. I wanted to try to combine the two, but I couldn't play anything. So when I graduated and moved to London I got a piano, started learning how to play, writing songs, finding other musicians to play with, then Roxy happened."

Roxy music didn't just happen, they exploded.

The effect they had on a then insipid scene was plainly traumatic. Bowie aside, they were the first to take the overt stylisation of The Sweet, Slade, T Rex, *et al* beyond the realm of teenybop trivia, to a place where it was acceptable to the rock crowd. They were also the first band to throw precious musicianly credentials clean out the window, and they established the precedent for moving from nowhere to everywhere by keen captivation of public imagination before the media has time to catch up with itself.

But best of all, their no holds barred juggling of abstruse visual and musical elements was so bold and unrepentant that you either went with it, or you bought your copy of *Mud Slide Slim* and your armchair there and then.

Of the imagery distortion that Roxy used so spectacularly, Ferry has this to say:

"I was a student of Richard Hamilton, who is in a sense a disciple of the surrealist Marcel Duchamp. Hamilton was the first British pop artist, that's why I went to study with him, because he was doing precisely that—working with images, working out their meanings, and distorting them.

"To me it was more interesting than pure abstract painting because he used images from popular culture as his subject matter. To some extent I've tried to do it in music. Sometimes I use other songs, or other kinds of songs, or film themes as subject matter. I just have fun playing with things in the same way as one plays with words. Most people who write in English delight in playing with words because it's a medium where you can play around with double or triple meanings."

. . . And of the performing flair that Roxy used equally as spectacularly he says:

"It just seemed to me that the music we were doing should be presented with some sort of verve. It's just *care*," he pleads, "people pay to go and see things. It was the influence of the black people I suppose, who always put on a bit of a show. I saw Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding, Sam and Dave and all those Stax people. The music was amazing, the passion was so great, and they looked great. They dressed up because they were on *stage*, and that was part of it that had just gone by the board."

. . .But mention the persona he moulded for himself and. . .

"I didn't create it. I created some aspects of it, but people overwrite about things; stress certain things that you do because they make good copy. Or they think *'that's good image. we'll write about that because there's no-one else like that.'* They don't give credit to the fact that it's only a tiny part of what you're up to."

Yet the promise of elegance that was held forth proved seductive. A Roxy gig during the years '73/'74 was like a parade of peacock couture, with seas of bright young things throwing sidelong glances in admiration of themselves or envy of others. No matter how it was worked people related strongly to it.

"I think they related to the hipness. If I went on stage unshaven and looking like death warmed up, I think they'd get into that. I think they understand me more than people maybe give them credit for. Because they know that I'm playing around with images, and that it doesn't really mean anything."

It may never have meant anything to him but many people took it perhaps a bit too seriously, and when, in the ensuing years, the cold morning light turned it all to worthless trinkets, a sense of desertion was in the air. As though Ferry had whisked off in flurry of cocktails and left his audience to untangle their own illusions.

"I think they've all betrayed *me*," he laughs, and then, no longer laughing. "I'd like to think that they're all out there rooting for me, but I don't know. I haven't had any feedback for a while and that's important. A lot of new names have appeared in the past year and I don't know how much that means that the people who were there before. . . Although I'm not a '60s musician who's still going. . ."

That's exactly why I'm asking you the question.

"And I don't know the answer, yet."

He should worry though. Three sell out dates at the Albert Hall last year is hardly the end of the line.

However, about the notion that he squandered his talents in stages, inducing luxury and delusions of self-importance, he is utterly firm.

"That's not true. I know myself too well to let that happen. I just know how much work I've done since I started making records. I love making records; it's my vehicle. I always assumed that people knew I was as serious as I ought to be about making records and that playtime is restricted."

(I'm inclined to believe him. Not counting the live album, Ferry, with and without Roxy, has made nine *albums over the past five years—that's one album every seven months until the release of "In Your Mind".)*

"I'm a sort of explorer socially in as much as I have met a lot of people whom I wouldn't have met otherwise, if we're talking about celebrity games. If we're talking about financial security then that's the only sort of security it does give you," he concludes with sharp irony.

As for his continual gossip column presence:

"I resent it. I say go to hell. That's why it became so hard to live in London. I couldn't go anywhere without people saying, *'Oh he's gone uptown now. Now that he's made it he's lost touch.'*

"How do you *lose touch?* I could never change because I'm not that sort of person. I didn't start doing it until I was a complete person—most people do it when they're forming and teenagers get spoilt. I was me before I started making records."

Those who consider the most potent expressions of Ferry's *ouvre* to be the first two Roxy albums, and who think Roxy grew stale and repetitive in their later years, please stand.

"It makes me a bit sad that there are people like that. That wasn't the greatest expression of my talent as far as I'm concerned."

What was then?

"It's all scattered about on different albums, and some of it is on this one. But it gets harder every year as you can imagine."

Harder to what?

"To be able to turn yourself on as much as I have this time. It's this thing of not wanting to repeat yourself, that's really why it gets harder. If you look at anybody's work you find that they begin to repeat themselves. . . I don't want to burn myself out.

"I'm more sensitive than I ought to be about it. It hurts me when you say that people think I sold myself short and did merely what was expected of me, because I always felt that I didn't. What am I going to do, a tap dancing record or something? Obviously there has to be some strand of me running through the whole thing.

"I think my work is as varied as most people's working in music at the moment and it's also as interesting. I'll stand by it, you know.

"I'll fight anybody for it."

It's funny how public image tells lies. If Bryan Ferry is a calculating egocentric fop then he hides it well. The Bryan Ferry I met seemed calm, resolutely sure of his personal values, but perhaps a little confused by the circumstances—his ambitions have thrown him into.

He likes a joke, and seems to take himself a lot less seriously than popular misconception would have us believe. "Maybe it's because I never relax when I do interviews," he suggests.

The following morning—or later that same day for Ferry, who spent the rest of the night working on the final running order of his album—we went to the nearby castle of Chillon, sited on a rock outcrop in the lake.

Pausing at the souvenir stand on the way out, he picked up a copy of Byron's *Prisoner Of Chillon*, a poem inspired by the story of a priest who was imprisoned in medieval times in the cold, rock-hewn castle dungeons.

Opening the book at the last page, he read softly to himself the penultimate line.

"These four walls of my prison I have come to love."

And with a slight chuckle he put down the book and walked away.

Knowing Ferry's flair for theatrics I'm inclined to think he was writing the end of this piece for me. But don't take it too seriously.

LITTLE RIVER BAND

AND THE SELF-FULFILLING SUCCESS PROPHECY

THREE YEARS AGO THEY SAID WHAT THEY *WANTED* TO HAPPEN. AND IT HAS.

AH, BUT THERE'S *A LOT* MORE INVOLVED THAN MERE MONEY AND BIG HITS.

Anthony O'Grady

On the wall of Armstrong's Studio where Little River Band recorded their latest smash hit album, *Sleeper Catcher*, was a scribbled-on piece of paper headed-up BOYLAN'S RULES OF RECORDING.

Boylan is John Boylan, a respected man in American production circles. He captured Boston on their first smash hit album and he produced LRB's *Diamantina Cocktail* smash hit elpee.

The Rule Sheet is really a studio graffiti piece, there are scribbles and puns and jokes from people who just wandered in and picked up a pencil. But in between doodles like *"Producers with laryngitis make better lovers than monkeys"* and *"Fluffing a solo is certainly better than farting thru a whole track"*, is a sort of Gentleman's Studio Code. It reads like this:

1. *Less Is More*
2. *Form Follows Function (Follows Fun,* someone had added)
3. *A Cheerful Musician Makes A Better Record*
4. *No Amount Of Overdubbing Can Cover Up A Bad Track*
5. *Perserverance Pays*
6. *The Producer Is Always At Least Partially Right*
7. *If You Want To Say Something About An Overdub, Be There While It's Being Done.*
8. *When All Else Fails, Take A Day Off.*
9. *It's Hard To Make A Sloppy Record In A Tidy Studio.*
10. *Be Prepared To Change Any Of The Above Rules If It Will Help Make A Better Record.*

Geddit? Total good natured efficiency with maximum attention to inter-personal courtesy between the human components involved. Both Napoleon Hill and Dale Carnegie made fortunes *selling* similar codes that also boil down to something like: *To Be Successful Think Successful, Work Successful and Act Successful With Your Fellow Man.*

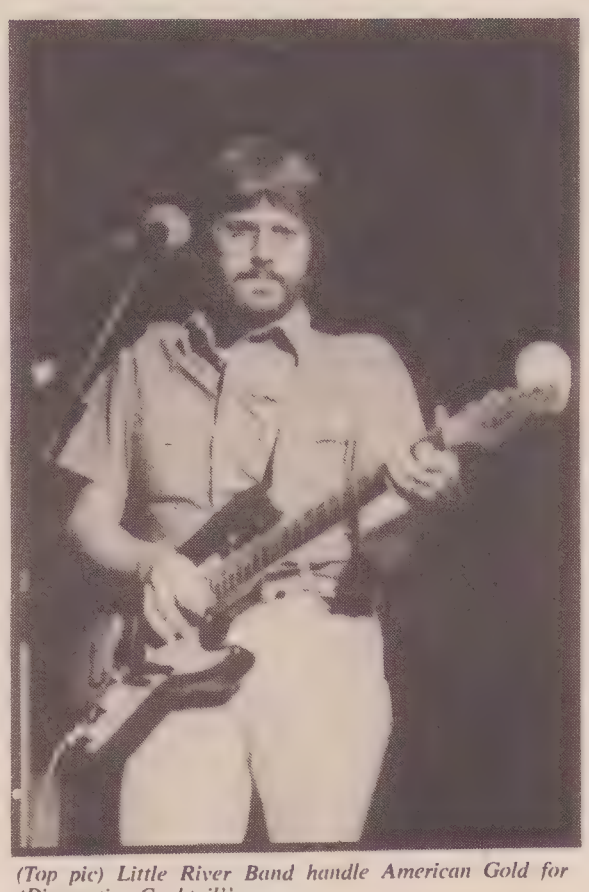
Ah, but what is success?

For Little River Band at this stage it's a scintillating list of sales, charts honours. Plus a cache of awards, including a mind-boggling, and arm-wrenching, total of eight in last year's National Rock Industry Awards.

Did you know Little River have now amassed more sales around the world than *any* other Oz-recorded group *ever?* About one and a half million albums sold in the Americas and Oz-land alone (those two markets account for the vast majority of LRB sales). In Australia the first, self-titled album did 60,000 (despite a totally drek cartoony cover showcasing the band as older-day Archies). *After Hours* slumped to a mere 40,000 (even though it climbed higher and stayed longer in the charts than *Little River Band*). Ah, but *Diamantina Cocktail* has now passed the 160,000 mark *and* it scored The Double—top of the singles charts with *Help Is On Its Way* and top of the albums charts.

In America the first two albums were combined into one package which sold an estimated 300,000. *Diamantina Cocktail* went gold for sales of over $1,000,000 worth of albums—it's now sold approx. 650,000 in the U.S. and a platinum-winning 100,000 in Canada.

Capitol Records in the U.S. now expect *Sleeper Catcher* to get gold in real fast time, and natch it'll ship platinum (50,000 copies) the first day on sale in Oz.



(Top pic) Little River Band handle American Gold for 'Diamantina Cocktail".
(Above) Graham Goble gleams with efficient expertise (pic Bob King).

EARLY DAYS

Little River Band was formed in 1975 from the remnants of Mississippi. Mississippi went to England in 1974, was double-dealed into instant poverty and oblivion by a shady business manager. Gloom abounded.

At least though, they learnt an important lesson in survival. Don't let other people take care of business.

Mississippi back then was Beeb Birtles, Derek Pellici, Graham Goble. Enter two more grizzled warriors—singer Glenn Shorrock and manager Glenn Wheatley. Shorrock was no stranger to being flat broke. He'd gone to England with The Twilights and The Axiom, and bombed out twice. Plus another year playing with a multi-national group, Esperanto, that didn't make sense or money in any language.

Glenn Wheatley had gone to England with The Masters Apprentices and ended up flat broke and busted. *(Are you starting to get the picture?)* But then Wheatley moved into the management company that handled the New Seekers where his boss, one David Joseph, by all accounts treated his cohorts like proverbial dirt under the heel.

So far the list reads like The Losers Convention of 1974. The only thing is, these guys really believed they could make it. At the very least they mustered up enough Positive Thought for another crack at making it.

The group limped back along various trails to Australia. Once they'd settled in Melbourne they started rehearsing, added Rick Formosa on guitar, Roger McLachlan on bass and began working. Nothing special, just the usual pub grind and suburban dance shows.

Can you imagine Glenn Shorrock, dressed in a Superman cape, leaping about stage? How about him delivering vaudevillian patter from centre stage?

No??? Well, he did. Along with impressions of Joe Cocker and other artists. And the band played just about everything in the Top 10. Plus a few heavy metal slasheroos to keep the drunk dancers moving.

Oh yes, plus some original stuff. Like *Curiosity Killed The Cat, Emma, Man In Black.*

Actually it was a good show. You couldn't hope to see better from an unrated band appearing around the local watering holes.

The main surprise is when you look back and think it was just three years ago. Back then Glenn Wheatley was catching trams and buses to appointments, which wasn't a lot of fun in a heatwave, especially when a fledgling rock magazine like RAM was then three quarters of a mile up and down hill from the nearest stop.

Ah, but what did a bit of sweaty footslogging matter? This band (now called Little River Band, 'cos Mississippi was "too grandiose") had a plan. Right from the early days, even before they signed with EMI, they'd worked out what they *wanted* to happen. And the guidelines went something like this:

1. *We are an Australian group based in Australia.*
2. *We will always be based in Australia*
3. *Unfortunately Australia can't support its own rock bands for any extended length of time. Also, the Big Time Rock Game is overseas.*
4. *Therefore to keep going we have to be an international band.*
5. *We think we'll aim straight for America, we've already been to England.*

It would be stupid to suggest there wasn't a full measure of calculation in Little River's aim to become internationally known.

This was no group of loony kids with unaware eyes and minds all mushed up with Rock Dreams.

It was definitely a cool-headed, the-whole-is-better-than-a-collection-of-loose-parts operation.

And it wasn't strictly a case of a bunch of losers gathering together for strength. The guys had strong track records. Beeb Birtles had had Big Success with the Zoot, Glenn Shorrock with The Twilights and Axiom, Graham Goble with Mississippi Mk I *(the three piece studio version)*. Derek Pellici joined Mississippi later in the piece but no one could deny he was a crisply excellent drummer. Rick Formosa was recently arrived from Canada, a classically trained guitarist with scoring and arranging talents. Roger McLachlan came from New Zealand to play in the band for "Godspell."

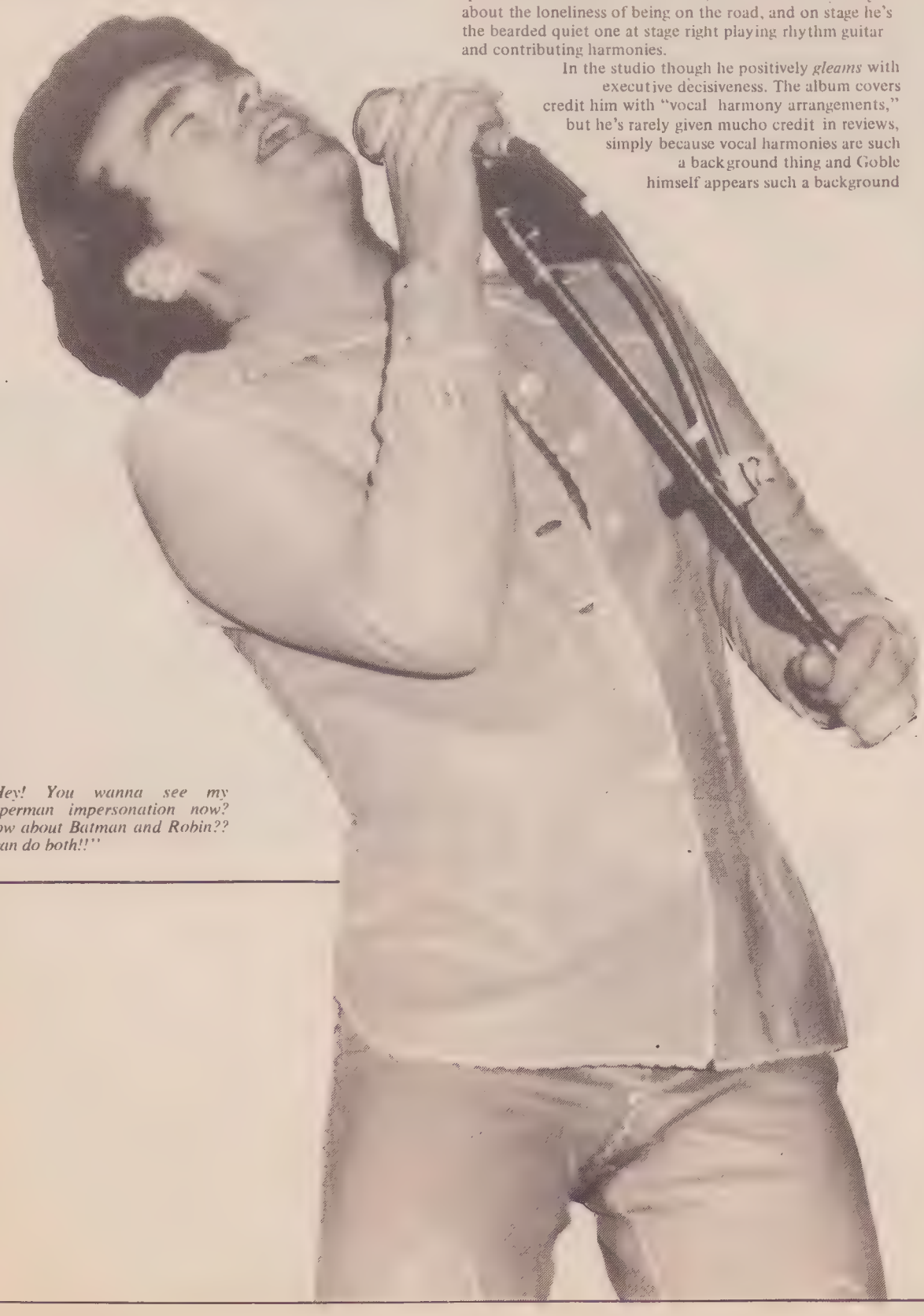
They knew their chops, they'd done the rounds, had had hits, had been big, had been dumped on, had learnt their lessons, they thought they could make it.

And they were veterans, which meant they had time on their side.

For rock is not a young man's game anymore. In the fifties up to the mid-sixties, kids of eighteen and young men of twenty were getting the big hits. But in the seventies, the term Top Thirty has taken on a whole new dimension—chronology.

In 1975, at a fighting average age somewhere between the mid to late twenties, Little River were obviously ready to go, even if the strain of previous bouts sometimes showed. *"This is my last band ,* said Glenn Shorrock in an early interview, *"I don't think I could get up the enthusiasm to go through all the building up stages again."*

But then a year and a half later, after the success of *Curiosity Killed The Cat,* and two hit albums in Oz, a good selling first elpee in America and a constant string of well-received shows both here and overseas, he could say: *"I know what I'm going to be doing and that I'm going to be eating for the next two years. That's* certain, and it's a great relief."



"Hey! You wanna see my Superman impersonation now? How about Batman and Robin?? I can do both!!"

STUDIO LIVING AND CUSTOMS

Eating? Little River can afford to dine out every night. Or maybe they'd prefer home-cooking in the newly-bought houses that have suddenly cropped up in the band's lists of assets. When they get home that is. From January through to the end of March, LRB were studio bound with *Sleeper Catcher. Sleeper Catcher,* like *Diamantina Cocktail,* is a purely Oz expression. It refers to a person who scrabbles around picking up lost bets in a game of two-up.

Little River sure wear their nationality where it counts. right on the album cover. Only thing is, most true blue Ozzies wouldn't know what a Diamantina Cocktail or Sleeper Catcher was—if LRB didn't tell 'em.

The thing you notice right off about LRB in the studio is the total, business like efficiency with which they work. At the closing stages of *Sleeper Catcher* they used not one but two studios. One for overdubbing keyboards, guitar and other music fills. One for vocals and mixing.

By this stage John Boylan's visa has expired, he is back in the U.S. and LRB are adding the finishing touches themselves. They don't need to consult so frequently the *Boylan Rules Of Recording*, various members zot smoothly from studio to studio—a vocal harmony here, checking on a bass fill there, sorting out a keyboard arrangement elsewhere. It's not the wham-bam-bash automotive line stuff, more like a group of skilled Swiss craftsmen doing the final assembly on a gold plated watch.

At this late stage of the game members are popping in and out as required. Dave Briggs is working on a few guitar lines in one studio, sharing the space with Graham Goble who's arranging vocal harmonies. Goble's also keeping a close check on the other studio where a keyboard overdub is going down. Beeb Birtles is floating between the two consoles adding a high harmony here, putting in a suggestion for the keyboard solo there. Derek Pellici wanders in, shakes sand from his sandals, hits a gong a few times, wanders out again. Glenn Shorrock comes in, listens to the new vocal arrangements, settles down for a night of voice work. To the outside observer the most immediately noticeable feature is the absolute importance of Goble.

In the public life of the band Goble is so low-key, a publicity press release that ommitted him from the band once almost hit the printing presses before the mistake was spotted. He doesn't do interviews, he writes a lot of songs about the loneliness of being on the road, and on stage he's the bearded quiet one at stage right playing rhythm guitar and contributing harmonies.

In the studio though he positively *gleams* with executive decisiveness. The album covers credit him with "vocal harmony arrangements," but he's rarely given mucho credit in reviews, simply because vocal harmonies are such a background thing and Goble himself appears such a background person. Ah, but to see him juggle with lines, accents, timings, is like watching an artist add intricate detail to an oil painting.

Mostly, harmonies are simply layered structures of repeated lines a third, fifth or octave higher.

But Goble belongs to a more complex architectural school, dealing in exotica like sixths, minor and major sevenths, overlapping lines and brusque counterpoints.

"There's one track with *eleven different* harmonies repeated dozens of times," says Beeb happily. "You just can't appreciate how important Graham is until you've seen him work."

The most relaxed studio worker is chubby Dave Briggs. He swings round and round on a swivel chair giggling and chortling, breaking into studio takes with whoops of high humour.

On the face of it, Briggs is the least *reverent* of the group. He's the one who, after the band's triumphant appearance at Rockarena last year, laughingly quoted the Crosby Stills Nash and Young line: *"We start out real slow then fizzle out altogether."* He rips off a shriekeroo feedback guitar fill and Glenn Shorrock wonders if it's a bit um, *ragged* at the end.

"It's fine," assures Briggs.

"Well," says Glenn seriously, "you're the one who has to live with it for the next year." His tone suggests a decade in a barbed wire shirt would be preferable to a year with a ragged solo.

CORPORATION SONG-MAKING.

That's the way LRB work. Very little is said in haste or anger, everyone deals with each other with democratic politeness, with deference to each other's areas of responsibility. If Dave Briggs says his guitar solo is OK, it would probably take a full scale meeting and hundreds of listen-backs to upset his ruling. At times you get the impression LRB are more an interlocking corporate structure than an actual *band.* But then, these days the old concept of a band being a group of people sharing the same vibe at *all* times is outdated. *All* the Big Groups are corporations, both for tax purposes and musical production. The most constant criticism of LRB is that they're an ensemble of identikit craftsmen who package a synthesis of jaunty rhythms and harmony vocals from the CSN&Y/Eagles school.

And in fact, to the jaded ear, the criticism has validity, except that the CSN&Y/ Eagles references are themselves outdated. "As individuals we're really more into jazz-rock," says Beeb. "It was there on *Diamantina Cocktail* and you'll notice it more this time."

The fact is, all the big new groups who've made it big in America recently are synthesis groups Boston, Foreigner, Kansas. . . if you haven't heard it all before in different form you haven't been listening for the past six years. But then, the if-it's-not-totally-original-it-can't-be-good school of criticism is also now outdated. As an American reviewer noted about Boston: *"This record is as ridiculously good as it is ridiculously derivative. I know I've heard it all before and I may be getting commercially exploited but who cares? I'm tapping my feet."*

TRADITIONAL VALUES

After the studio visit, there's a dinner date with Beeb Birtles, George McArdle and Beeb's live-in girlfriend Megan. Beeb is a genuine-certified Nice Guy. The new house is nestled in a quiet, outlying prosperous Melbourne suburb, but we drive there in Beeb's 1953 Humber. "It'll go for another year," he says confidently.

"I **like** traditional values," he says, pulling up his steep, narrow driveway. "*I'm* the one who wants to get married."

George McArdle is wandering around the empty rooms of the house he's just moved into.

"Do you know what Glenn *(Wheatley)* told me yesterday?" he exclaims. "He says I should *develop more of an interesting personality!*"

Indignation colours his delivery.

He's a quiet Scotsman is George. He's mostly background at LRB concerts except for a few minutes of bass guitar solo. But those few moments are enough to convince he can get more variation out of four strings than most can out of six. Simply he's a ridiculously classy player. Low profile or not. We eat Lebanese then wander down to the Bombay Rock. George points to some glowering high school buildings in a side street near the place. "That's where I went to school," he says. "I was in my first band there. . . it wasn't a bad band actually, we used to get a lot of work."

Moments later he has to convince the doorman he *really is* a Little River Bander. Develop a more forceful personality indeed.

THE SUCCESS TRAP.

"The thing that's really scaring me at the moment," says Glenn Wheatley, "is that *all* our media coverage is so congratulatory. It's all centred around success in the US and money earned. And it's scary, because finance is *not* the motive. There are so many things that come before that.

"Right from the start we said we hoped to be an international band based in Australia. We don't want to live in the United States, that's not the band's idea of happiness. But we don't want to over-saturate Australia. We've all seen that happen too many times before. Australia is so important to us—for recording, living and working and we just don't want to blow it."

But there seems little likelihood of that. Little River are the most shining example of Positive Thinking I've ever come across in Australia. Not the Billy Thorpe I-Am-The-Greatest form of bravado, but quiet perspicacity that sets out broad goals then determindedly sets to work on the details that make it happen.

A self-fulling prophecy? Make that self-fulfilling perserverence and perspirance.

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BLUES ON THE BACK PORCH

BLUES IN A $1,000 SUIT

IT'S ALL THE SAME TO B.B. KING

(Pic — Juergen Hasenkoph)

BRIAN CASE HEARS WHY

"Everybody wants to know why I sing the blues.
Yes I say everybody wanna know why I sing the blues,
Well I've been around a long time,
I really have paid my dues. . .

Clearly nobody has told B.B. King about horizontal stripes and The Larger Man. He sits square as a samurai in his hotel room, fists on knees, generous belly and chest transforming his horizontally-striped shirt into a map of mountainous regions. Around his neck he wears a golden pharoah. He exudes well-being, good humour and what the uproarious churches call justification. B.B. King, striped and justified. . .

Lucille stands propped in the corner, a far and crafted cry from the eight-dollar guitar he started out on back in Itta Bena, Mississippi. Why does he call his guitar Lucille. B.B. was playing a flea-flop dance hall down in Twist, Arkansas, and two young men got in a fight.
One of them kicked over a kerosene heater in the centre of the floor, whoosh went the hall, both cats burned to death and B.B. got out with just his guitar. The name of the woman? Lucille. "She must be some girl," said The Man.

The chitlin circuit of tin-roof barns and fruit-crate stages, farm hands in Sears & Roebuck finery stomping on the tamped dirt floor. B.B. King spent 20-some years out there in the boondocks, set up a personal record of 342 one-nighters back in 1956.

"Well, you know what I mean. Some of us feel that there are people that'd never get a chance to hear us if we didn't go to these places. There are people that never visit the cities, say, if they live 200 miles outside of the city and the transportation is bad. If they did get someone to take them, they wouldn't have any money to spend when they got there. So I feel that we're kinda messengers."

Didn't the continual touring get him down? Just how do you get your chops up after hours of airport delay, grabbed snacks and sleeplessness?

"I think the way I look at it is as part of the paying of the dues. Everything is. Like in a Country & Western song I heard–*I Didn't Promise You A Rose Garden*– or something like that. Now, I was tired. Yes. I remember reading once that a lady was having a tyre changed on an automobile and it fell down on her baby. She picked it up and pulled her baby out, not realizing what she'd done. Well, that's the type of strength that happens. You find the energy. You don't know where it was stored. I never miss jobs, because how many people have sacrificed something to catch the show that night–and I'm the one guy that will make it happen. If I don't get there, then a whole lotta people will be let down. Outa my 31 years I've missed 16 dates and only about 4 or 5 of them was my own fault. The rest was what they write on legal contracts–an Act of God. I was constantly thinking that we must let the people know we were trying *ANYTHING* to get here–even if I had to come out here in my *BED!"*

He guffawed at the idea. But it wasn't so funny during his last tour of Australia when he collapsed on stage at Sydney's Hordern Pavilion. Right now, BB's in London. Playing England has a special place on his roster. It was the accolades of Eric Clapton, George Harrison and The Rolling Stones that boosted his reputation beyond the die-hard blues following. Didn't he resent the patronage of imitators?

"No, I don't resent it because through the history I've studied, I've found that jazz, for example, was never popular until the whites started to play it. Boogie-woogie wasn't popular until Freddie Slack, and the same thing in other branches of music. I'm very glad that it eventually did happen. Oh, there have been times when I did feel bad–it's when someone imitates us, yes, and they're able to play places that the authentic ones cannot. Then I'm very disturbed. Talent should be heard. It shouldn't be discriminatory, so that you can play and I cannot. That I don't like. The English rock musicians gave the blues the boost, they're the ones that gave it the shot in the arm that made it really get up."

Oddly enough, the capitulation of that bastion of the Establishment, Carnegie Hall, to B.B.'s brand of the blues failed to thrill him. Something for the scrapbook, but nothing for the dignification of the art form. Very much of his generation, B.B.'s views on Blues in Sunday Best run counter to the middle-class need for plebian rebel-heroes.

"I've always believed that no matter what the critics say, blues music is just as fine if presented as well as any other type of music. I thought very hard about how to bring it to the people, try to present it in a way where nobody would be shocked –you know , bad lyrics, bad sounds, bad orchestration. . . ."

He spread his big arms and shook his head. "Oh–I get lost for words, but if you can understand what I'm saying? I was a disc jockey for about 5 years, never did learn to talk."

Riley King was recommended for the disc jockey slot in the Memphis black radio network WDIA, by Sonny Boy Williamson, took the initials B.B–Blues Boy –before joining up with Bobby Bland in 1948 to form the Beale Streeters. The following year, he had his first national hit with *3 O'Clock Blues.*

"It's a personal thing," he explained. "Growing up as I did, we had nothing and everything was bad with us. Sure, I didn't have much education. I'm the guy that went through to 10th Grade, but I've travelled so much and seen so many different environments that I think that now I could safely say that I've finished High School. It's like the way the Civil Rights Movement was in the States in the early '60s–most of the people didn't know what the blacks were going through. Not just whites, but a lotta black people just don't know their forefathers were slaves–and it's nothing to be ashamed of. This is what I've been trying to bring out, among young blacks as well as the sophisticated. It's taken a lifetime to do it, but it seems to me like we're making a bit of headway."

Young blacks, either ashamed of the blues, , contemptuous of Mom and Pop's music, are beginning to take an interest again. *Roots* had something to do with it. The tradition, B.B. feels, will continue, through probably in a refined form.

His sense of mission still drives him around the prison concert circuit, paying all expenses out of his own pocket.

"What actually got me into that, it was a black fella that had just been promoted to Director of the County Correctional Institution in Chicago, Winston Moore. I was playing at Mister Kelly's when I had this call from Mr Moore. He'd asked many people prior to us and nobody'd come, and he asked if we'd go in there and play. He said he'd like to let the inmates know that if treated with respect in his direction, he would also try to do whatever he could for them. We went in there and we invited the press.

"When we got into the Institution, we found that about 80% were black or Puerto Rican, and most of them were very very poor. They couldn't make bail for themselves. The judicial system was such that the date for trial hadn't come up, and they'd been there 6,7,8 months already. If and when they did go to trial, and were found not guilty, they weren't compensated anything. If they were found guilty and they'd been in there maybe a year, it wasn't taken off their time. They told their story to the press and the press played it up very big, and about 2 months later one of the TV networks did an in-depth story on the situation. Then the Correctional Institutions changed their policy. I felt that all came about because of what we did, and I felt very good. I started to think that everybody owed something to society. That was one way I could repay in some small way what has happened to me."

Critics find little of the Delta tradition in B.B. King's blues. He cut his teeth on an aunt's Blind Lemon Jefferson records, is cousin to the late Bukka White, a classic Mississippi bluesman, loved T-Bone Walker for his clarity of touch, Lonnie Johnson, but also picked up on the technical sophistication of jazz guitarists like Django Reinhardt and Charlie Christian. His voice has something of the delivery of jazz's blues shouters like Jimmy Rushing and Joe Turner, the heavily stressed terminal words, for example.

"I never lived in Chicago. Most people say I'm a Chicago bluesman. If they check out history a bit, they'll find that most people they call Chicago blues players came from other places *TO* Chicago. You name them there's hardly one that was born there."

The most jazz-oriented of blues guitarists, he has a great respect for jazz's greatest improvisers. "Wes Montgomery? Oh gosh, yes! If anybody liked guitar and didn't like Wes, they'd hafta be sick! In fact Wes's brother, Monk Montgomery has a Jazz Society in L.A., where I live, so I'm one of his ambassadors of jazz. My definition of jazz is the Big Brother of Blues. If a guy's playing blues like we play, he's in High School. When he starts playing jazz it's like going on to college, to a school of higher learning. Good jazz musicians, you can feel the blues part in it–makes you wanna tap your feet or shake a little. That's what music's supposed to do. Music soothes the savage breast, and whatever bit of savage there is in me, it really makes me calm down."

And off he went, an incurable record collector, to ransack Dobells and Collets for jazz and blues albums. Back home, he's equipped his bus with a sound system to take his 8-track tapes and cassettes to keep him going on the road.

There's plenty more road for B.B. King.

Yeah they told me everything would be better up the country,
Mmmm, everything was fine, I caught me a bus uptown, baby, and all the people got the same trouble as mine.
I got the blues, uh, huh. . .
I say I've been around a long time.
Mmmm, I've really paid some dues.

ERIC CLAPTON

RETURN OF THE RELUCTANT HERO

(He'll go broke if he don't work—at least that's what he tells himself)

By. JOHN PIDGEON

There was once a movie actor who, having made his name as a heavy, took to playing the romantic lead. But no matter how often he wore a white hat or rode into the sunset, he was always the heavy.

For many rock fans, Eric Clapton remains the guitar hero, a memory from the 60s, not flesh and blood, almost as if he had died, not Hendrix. The role was one he played reluctantly even then, a piece of type-casting he has endeavored for years to live down.

As long ago as 1970 he told a reporter, "I don't think guitar playing is enough. It's very hard for me to see why anyone would laud a cat who just plays guitar. It's really not enough somehow." Not for him maybe, but it satisfied a legion of fetishistic fans.

Such feelings of personal dissatisfaction date from further back. He had tired of deification and abdicated for Hendrix at least two years earlier, even before his frustration within Cream's triangular confines had been chronically intensified by his introduction to the Band and *Music From Big Pink*.

"It was *that* potent," he explains, not for the first time, yet with the undiminished fervor of St. Paul recounting his jaunt to Damascus. "I got hold of a bootleg tape from somewhere at the end of that last Cream tour, the one before the farewell tour, and I used to take it and put it on as soon as I checked into my hotel room and listen to it and *then* go and do the gig and be utterly miserable and then rush back and put the tapes on and listen to them and go to sleep fairly contented until I woke up the next morning and remembered who I was and what I was doing."

Only hindsight enables those who were separated from rock's elite by press enclosures and Hell's Angels to understand the impact of an album that could hardly be said to have taken the charts by storm. "It was," as Clapton puts it, "very much a closed shop. It wasn't publicly exposed the same way as it was to the musicians. I had to go and see what they looked like right after I got the *Big Pink* album so I went up to Woodstock and visited, and they turned out to be *great* people, *incredibly* great people, very intelligent, very tight. And I was in awe of them ever since."

So he forsook Cream and guitar bravura, leaving *Badge* on *Goodbye* as a sketch map of where he was heading. Blind Faith—his first, abortive attempt to embody his newly absorbed principles of candidness, subtlety, eclecticism and understatement—failed largely because of the crushing external pressures of an industry that assessed quality in terms of commercial potential and a press and public whose mindless anticipation imbued the group's choice of name with ironic overtones.

"It started out so quietly," Clapton recalls. "It went for a long time, just jamming and rehearsing, before anyone knew anything about it, and suddenly. . .BANG! We were faced with the ultimate dilemma: that *we* weren't ready and *they* were."

The group's chances of survival were slight from the start: they died altogether when Clapton pulled the tubes out almost as soon as that first and last American tour got underway. On George Harrison's enthusiastic recommendation Delaney and Bonnie had been hired as support act and Clapton became instantly and unshakably infatuated with both them and their music.

"I was so turned on by them," he admits, "I thought I could somehow try and stay in Blind Faith and skip off and do that as well. But Blind Faith didn't work like that. They wanted what I should've wanted too: a very tight, integral unit. But I didn't. I was feeling quite free. So that went by the board. I don't think Stevie's ever forgiven me somehow."

It's easy to dismiss his subsequent brief dalliance with Delaney and Bonnie as married man's distant, inconsequential bit-on-the-side, but for Clapton it was a significant union. With them he found the will and the confidence to sing and in their backing band his future sidemen (most notably bassist Carl Radle, who he's used ever since), while Delaney introduced him to J.J. Cale.

His recording of Cale's *After Midnight* in 1970 marks the start of a lasting admiration that has revealed itself repeatedly in his vocal and guitar style, and he talks about Cale with the same mixture of affection and respect he shows for the Band: "The subtlest character around! When we were doing the *Slowhand* album, he came to town to do the New Vic. He was so good! It was just like the fucking record, except that he didn't play it the same. It was the same intensity. We stood in the wings and watched him and *whispered* to each other. It was really good. . . And you should see his guitar—it's *unbelievable.* It's got no back to it. It's an old acoustic with about eight pick-ups—and they *all* work— and he gets the most amazing combination of sounds out of it. He can get a wah-wah without using a pedal, for instance. He's a real genius with electronics. . . We brought him down to the studio to listen to *Cocaine,* to see what he thought of our version of it. And he *liked* it. . . And he got us to go and play with him at the New Vic. So me and Carl, I think it was, went on and joined in and played *Cocaine."*

In fact, *Cocaine,* though Cale's song, is less an homage to him than another track on *Slowhand, Lay Down Sally,* written by Clapton and Marcy Levy, and, as Clapton puts it, "as close as I can get, being English." *Cocaine* itself was recorded "because he nicked the *Sunshine Of Your Love* riff. It was a straight lift. I told him. I said, 'Look, man, you don't mind me doing this, but you *did* nick that riff!' And it is pretty fucking obvious."

Released as a single, Clapton's *After Midnight* made the American top twenty in December 1970, anticipating popular recognition of Cale's unique talents by several years, and again in 1974 Clapton showed that he was still ahead of the pack with a No. 1 (his first) cover of the Wailers' *I Shot The Sheriff,* when reggae, in the States at least, meant Johnny Nash.

In the second case, if not the first, Clapton's success clearly helped prime public taste, as had his championing of the blues guitarist some 10 years before, yet he allows himself no bows or bouquets.

"It's a funny stance to take. I put myself in the firing line, because the artist who I'm covering can either resent me or feel grateful, and when I met Bob it wasn't very clear *what* he felt about it, if anything at all. I feel it's a bit indulgent to sit back and feel content about it. And what do you do when you meet the man? Pat him on the head and say, didn't I do you a good turn? You've got to preserve a little bit of humility. I have to allow myself to think maybe he resents it in a way."

Ironically, this tireless paladin of black music has an uncomfortable reputation for racist opinionizing,which dates specifically from a moment's drunken blathering which in a bar room of other drunken blathers would have been forgotten with the morning's hangover, but spouted at the mike before a packed house was as generally misinterpreted as it was widely reported. His unfortunate tirade was rooted in patriotism rather than racism, spurred by indignation at England's apparent capitulation to the oil sheiks' shekels. But that loud-mouthed night will take a long time to live down.

"It's terrible," he groans. "I've been rehearsing at Island a little bit recently with Ginger because he wants to get an album out and I said I'd give him a hand. And all the time down at Island's Hammersmith complex there's lots of rasta men about, just hanging out, playing pool, having a smoke. One of them came up to me the other day and said, **'Is it true you really don't like black people?'** I went *oh no*, and it all came back to me about the night in Birmingham when I said something about Enoch Powell. I must've rabbitted on about nothing. . . foreigners. . . and actually I remembered the other day what started it was the upsurge in London of Arab money–spending and their total lack of respect for other people's property– *'How much is Hyde Park?'* and all that–and for some reason it all came pouring out of me that night and Enoch Powell was involved in it.

"And it still lives to this day. There are black West Indians and rasta men about who look at me with a *very* strange look. And it's a shame because there's nothing I can do. I keep saying, 'No, man, it was a joke, I was drunk.' And that doesn't help, because they don't like people who drink either!" But is it less racist to be racist about *rich* blacks than poor blacks?

If *Slowhand* is part tribute to J.J. Cale, Clapton's previous album, *No Reason To Cry*, was part belated acknowledgement of his debt to the Band, though their presence on the recording and the inclusion of a couple of their songs was initially unplanned.

"Tulsa musicians in L.A.," Clapton explains, referring to his own band, "behave very strangely. They tend to get very lazy or want to knock around. The Band actually owning the ranch where it was recorded, they were there most of the time, and Rick Danko, who's a real hustler, would be there trying to push songs or something, so you'd just have to show up there and they'd be ready to play, and my band would still be by the pool. So it just happened."

There were other celebrated guests on the sessions: Bob Dylan, Ron Wood, Billy Preston, Van Morrison, Jesse Ed Davis. . .

"I think it worked out okay. I just think that it was misinterpreted by the people who reviewed it. One of the reviews said I was *'cronying'*– hanging out and getting everyone to play on the record–and actually it was true, but. . . it was a very, very strong time at that studio, because it had been empty and hadn't been used, and suddenly all these people showed up from nowhere, and it was very hard to get any work done, because people kept walking in and picking up instruments and just playing. So the album's got that on it, and if that's wrong, well, fuck it!.'

And the outtakes sound like a bootlegger's wet dream: "I had a magnificent birthday party right in the middle of the sessions and we decided to record everything and everybody that came into the studio. There's Billy singing a couple of Ray Charles songs with the Band backing him. Superb stuff. Jesse Ed Davis, me, Robbie and Woody on guitars. *Amazing* stuff! And he [*Dylan*] showed up about eight o'clock in the morning and it just went on from there. New songs–he was making them up. And arguments going on about this and that, and lots of gossip about other musicians. . . We dissected the Beatles one by one. Most of it was Bob talking. He's a very funny character, all he needs is a word to spark him off and he'll get really intense and won't give a shit what he's saying. You just sit there amazed that this guy's being so outrageous, and then he'll just flip into a song and it's all forgotten and you carry on. . The only way I've ever been able to communicate with him is on a very jovial level. I can't imagine talking seriously to him about anything. He's got too much humour. He's all wit."

Wit? I'll say! Did you hear the one about. . . "the time he came down and we were trying to work and he goes in there and swans around for a little while in a black leather suit he's just got, and he managed to steal my percussionist's chick, who had one leg in a cast because she'd broken it. Not only that, but he stole all the clothes off Woody's bed, took the chick out through the window and shagged her in the tent in the garden outside the studio he had there ready for the occasion. With a cast on her leg! *Outrageous* fellow!"

Since Clapton returned from the dead or, more precisely, the walking wounded, almost four years ago, he has (discounting one or two inevitable changes) kept the same band together. That's longer than he stuck with Cream, Derek and the Dominos, Mayall, the Yardbirds, you name it. And yet this longest lasting line-up remains persistently less well-known than almost any other. Whenever people ask him what he's up to and who he's playing with, he has to run through the names: George Terry, Carl Radle, Dick Sims, Jamie Oldaker, Marcy Levy. (Yvonne Elliman having quit to work solo last year). And it's not just the punters who don't know who's who, only have eyes and ears for Eric.

"It even comes down to the lighting crew," he sighs. "They sometimes don't know and I'll just be playing chords with George playing a solo, and they'll keep the spotlight on me. And I have to keep gesturing: over there, over there. I don't know what that means."

That enforced anonymity is hard on a band that plays *so right*, where every note and everyone counts, where the girls have meant much much more than the usual supporting "chicks." Clapton agrees: "In every sense they're real people, musicians too, that's the thing. They were very strong, very, very strong indeed. It was a great temptation for me to walk off the stage and let them have half an hour each, cos they could've done it–multi-instruments and what have you. . . But I can't *ever* approach *anyone* as being anything other than a musician. For instance, I could never work with a *vocalist*, the idea of backing up a vocalist who can't play anything. . ."

Leaves him speechless.

So what now? The longest tour since the one that tore Cream apart 10 years ago, a live album, most likely because "they're very much of the opinion here [at RSO] that that is my forte–live albums–not in terms of artistry, but *financial* success." And then?

"I'd like to just cruise on at a very steady speed for a long time, rather than go up in flames. I could survive, I imagine, on the royalties that I've. . . but that's such a hypothetical question, because the company could fold and I'd go with it. There are so many different ways of looking at it.

"But in actual fact I get more money going on the road than I do from records. By miles. Twenty times as much. And that's always the incentive. The minute I stop thinking –how's the money coming in?–it's just too easy then. I've got to force myself into a position where I think, *well if I don't go out and fucking play*, **I will** *go broke*.

"Cos playing isn't everything. You've got a home life. You build up a little kind of empire: your house and a woman and people that depend on you. You can't just lie back. So you've got to *pretend* that you're actually on the verge of bankruptcy, so that you can go out and graft. Otherwise you just sit back and get fat and do fuck all.

"The real dilemma is that you have to face up to management trying to convince you all the time that you never have to do another thing in your life if you don't want to. That's what I get from Robert [*Stigwood*] every time I see him: if you want to pack it in, you can pack it in now, you don't have to do another thing, you're secure for the rest of your life. And that's the last thing you want to fucking hear! It's like you're out to pasture.

"I don't ever want to be broke again, nobody wants that, but I've got to keep myself in preparation for it mentally and spiritually somehow, even if it means creating a fantasy."

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It's not that Eric is tired here, or showing he's too pooped to pop, or anything like that. What we have here, in fact, is a recreation of that down-home, sitting on the back porch blues feel. (Pic Michael Putland/LFI).

NO PINKO SOCIALISTS ALLOWED

RUSH ARE ALL RIGHT (Geddit?)

MILES investigates the motivations that make the music that make RUSH premier heavy-metal headbangers.

And here, over the portals of my fort, I shall cut in the stone the word which is my beacon and my banner. The word which will not die, should we all perish in battle. The word which can never die on this earth, for it is the heart of it and the meaning and the glory.

The sacred word: EGO–
Closing passage of "Anthem", by Ayn Rand.

I got the job of interviewing Rush because I knew who Ayn Rand was–simple as that. Ayn Rand? Oh, she's an obscure ultra-right-wing American cult writer of the late 30s and early 40s and, yes, Rush follow her ideas. The epic *2112* is a re-write of her book *Anthem* and they also named their Canadian record label after the same book. But more about her later. . .

I did a crash course on Rush: played their albums, read interviews, re-read a couple of Ayn Rand's books and went to their concert.

They're a power-trio in the grand tradition of Cream, Nice and Blue Cheer updated into the late 70s with voice echoes, foldback EQ, phasing on the drums and a very sophisticated lighting system. Complete bombardment.

Drummer Neil Peart explains:

"Hard rock is our kind of music, the music we grew up on. It's what comes naturally to us. We just look at it as something that we're trying to keep contemporary. We're not trying to play the music of the late 60s. We're trying to play the music of the late 70s–which has grown out of the 60s. We're trying to take a modern approach, in the way The Beatles took a modern approach to Chuck Berry and so on. . .

"For us, the people we followed were Jeff Beck, The Who, Cream, Hendrix–mainly British bands."

"One would like to think it's because there's a stronger British influence in our music, our culture as Canadians, and because we're trying harder," Peart grins. And adds, "For me, the mystery with Aerosmith is not that they are not successful but that they're successful outside America."

To return to the gig:

Vocalist Geddy Lee has an interesting voice: very high-pitched and not unlike David Surkamp of Pavlov's Dog (as he's no doubt sick of hearing). At dynamic peaks in the music he breaks into high castrati shrieks and yelps like a throttled blackbird clamped to the PA.

Alex Lifeson is a reasonable guitarist of his genre (I've been to too many Hendrix, Cream and Zappa concerts to say better than that). He and Geddy–who also plays bass and synthesizer–trot about on a white stage-sized Cossett carpet like excited poodles while a Cape Canaveral style lightshow keeps up the ol' visual excitement.

Neil Peart sits behind a massive double drum kit. I remember when Keith Moon's double kit shocked America on The Who's first US tour, but now it's become mandatory heavy metal equipment. Peart takes it to its logical conclusion with highly amplified runs around the toms and occasional use of a phase-shift. He plays very simple shapes –needed, in fact, in a trio with no rhythm guitar–but on the night I saw him I thought his timing was defective.

I asked him about the concert.

"I was depressed. I wasn't playing like I should have been playing. There's a barometer there that says, 'This is what I'm shooting for tonight for that perfect show, and when I don't reach that level, it's not right.'"

Geddy: "By the same token, Alex and I both thought they were good nights."

Alex: "On the American tour, towards the end of the last month, I had that same feeling that I was not putting out like I should. But you just get to a point where fatigue is so deep, that you just can't."

Geddy: "When you do as many shows as we do, you are bound to slump sooner or later."

The gig was the 120th concert of their current tour.

Neil: "It's extremely illusive. I would say that out of all those shows there are only three that I would consider as the standard–as the ideal show–so I've got to figure that all those other 117 were substandard. Well, I don't mean they were *substandard* but that they were below the perfect level."

Geddy: "We don't expect the audience to know the standard. It's purely a personal measure against past performances."

This brought up the matter of their attitude towards their audiences. The audience was the usual HM crowd, pretending to play the guitar and giving power-salutes at the end of each number. Rush didn't seem to take any notice of them despite their obvious enthusiasm, if not fanaticism.

It seemed as though Rush's performance existed as a closed-off totality of its own, quite separate from anything the audience might do, and could have been performed the same just as easily anywhere on the planet. It wasn't a two-way thing at all.

Neil agrees and seems surprised that I should think that this was a bad thing. I said that I thought of a performance as an interaction *with* the audience. Geddy answered:

"From their perspective it is, but not from ours. We just have a goal to achieve and a certain standard to get to. And if you don't get that, no matter how wonderful the audience was to you, you still know it when you come off stage."

Neil: "It's just got to be the best possible show we can possibly put on."

I complained that they seemed to make no effort to put their individual personalities across to the audience–to show anything of themselves:

Neil: "It's all there. We're so imbued in our music and our performance that. . . what you're seeing, I guess, is just a level of professionalism. We just couldn't put more of ourselves into it. Are you talking about telling jokes to the audience or telling them when our birthday is?"

With all the discussion about individuals it was inevitable that the conversation should turn to Ayn Rand–high priestess of the ultra-right reds-under-the-bed brigade. It seemed very odd to me that a 70s rock group should dig up a cold-war hero and warm her up.

Neil: "She's just a very brilliant thinker as well. She has a great clarity of thought."

Geddy: "I think she's brought forth a lot of concepts and philosophies which have confirmed for us a lot of different things. I've just found it very positive. I've found a lot of truth in what she writes."

Ayn Rand's philosophy, in her own words, is that *"To be free, a man must be free of his brothers. That is freedom. That and nothing else."* **(Anthem 1937).**

In other words, the exact opposite of Christian charity and the whole European humanist tradition. In fact she regards "altruism as incompatible with man's nature, with the requirements of his survival, and with a free society." This is the theme of her book *The Virtue Of Selfishness: A New Concept Of Egoism.*

Ayn Rand is, naturally, fanatically anti-Communist. Her books are dedicated to *"helping to prevent. . . a socialist America"* and are filled with constant attacks on the evils of **"collectivism".** By this she means such communist horrors as free medical care, free schooling, unemployment benefits, sick pay, etc. Under the system of laissez-faire capitalism she advocates it would be a return to a total free-for-all with no controls at all on employers and with no welfare state at all.

Neil: "We're certainly devoted to individualism as the *only* concept that allows men to be happy, without somebody taking from somebody else. The thing for me about Ayn Rand is that her philosophy is the only one applicable to the world today–in every sense. If you take her ideas, then take them farther in your own mind, you can find answers to pretty well everything on an individual basis. Putting the individual as the first priority, everything can be made to work in a way that it can never be made to work under any other system."

I began to object to this statement but Neil interrupted excitedly:

"You have to have principles that firmly apply to every single situation. I think a country has to be run that way. That you have a guiding set of principles that are absolutely immutable–can never be changed by anything. That's the only way!" *(Shades of the 1000 Year Reich?)*

"The government's only functions are to protect the rights of the individual, therefore you need a police force and an army. You need an army to protect the individuals and a law court to settle their disputes. . .

"You set up this subjectively defined law, system of laws, that are immutable and incontrovertible and the economy is totally laissez faire capitalism and everybody's free. That's it. *Bang! Boom!* Go for it. You're on your own, Jack! And things like trade unions can still exist. I don't think those things are wrong–obviously they're necessary when you have a group of a few thousand people bargaining with one–but not government-sanctioned and government-supported and government-involved trade unions.

"Just one trade union for one factory. One group of employees has one person that deals with their affairs."

Instead of a multi-national as boss, you have the government.

"You have the government that owns airlines that lose money, school systems that lose money, build roads that lose money, hotels that lose money..."

I grumbled: Suppose I was an orphan and I was sick. I'd like to think that I would get free medical care.

"At whose expense?"

At the State's expense.

"The State? Well where does the State get this marvellous magic money?"

Tax.

"Exactly. Well, maybe I don't wanna pay tax. There's the Salvation Army and all those voluntary organisations. Don't you think all those could look after those welfare systems where they are necessary?"

I hope none of you ever go to a Rush concert on dole money. That wouldn't fit in with Rush's philosophy *at all.*

The thing is, these guys are advocating this stuff on stage and on record and no-one even questions it. No-one is on their case. All the classic hallmarks of the right-wing are there: the pseudo-religious language (compare their lyrics to the Ayn Rand quote at the head of this article) which extends right down to the touring crew: *road masters* instead of road managers. The use of a quasi-mystical symbol—the naked man man confronting the red star of socialism (at least I suppose that's what it's supposed to be). It's all there.

They are actually very nice guys. They don't sit there in jack boots pulling the wings off flies. They are polite, charming even, naive—roaming the concert circuits preaching what to me seems like pro-fascism like a leper without a bell.

Neil: "The example that we're trying to create, we live by. We don't want to get up on stage and be like John Lennon for instance, and ram the message down people's throats.

"Again it comes down to choice. Those things are in our lyrics and if people feel like paying attention to our lyrics and trying to get something out of it, it's there for them. If they don't, fine and well—we've got other things to offer as well."

Geddy: "Exactly. It's trying to have that kind of depth, that kind of a range in what we present. The choice is strictly up to the individual as regards on what level they're going to choose to be entertained by us. . . whether they be stimulated by what we have to say lyrically, entertained by what we have to present visually or interested in what we have to play. It's all choice."

I had to ask the obvious: if it was true freedom for the workers at a factory to bargain with the boss, why wouldn't they be even more free if they did away with him altogether and simply ran the place themselves as a workers' council—after all, they do all the work?

Neil: "Because then your freedom is negated. You have no freedom. You do what you're told to do. By the socialists. By the good of the people."

I really didn't see the difference between doing what the boss told you to do for the good of his fat bank account and doing what was best for the workers at the factory. Neil spelt it out, country simple. . .

"The guy next to you may have four kids, needs clothes, and he may have an aunt who has dispepsia of the spine who needs $10,000 for an operation. . ."

So my fellow worker's needs might influence my own financial position? But the factory owner's need for a Rolls Royce, a mistress and a yacht also influence my position. What made the boss right?

"He owns it. Private property. The most inviable individual right of all. If you own it, it's yours. Simple truth. If you own it, it belongs to you. You do what you want with it. How can you say it's otherwise?"

Well I didn't want to get into an argument about ownership of the means of production being a different matter from personal property—the trouble with this argument was that Rush haven't the faintest idea of what socialism is. I said there were no truly socialist countries but Neil thought otherwise:

"Well, most of Europe is, isn't it? Canada is."

What? A few nationalised industries? That's at best State capitalism.

"State capitalism? What's that? "

Vinylising

WINGS LONDON TOWN (Capitol)

London Town is a mixed bag. It doesn't bustle with any sort of energy, street or otherwise. It's cutesy and daddsy and limp wristed with flaccid lyrics. Play it softly in the background and damn if it doesn't subside into something akin to inconsequential chatter. If *this* is the sort of thing the McCartneys play at home, no wonder daughter Heather loves The Sex Pistols.

Still, there shouldn't be any *real* complaints on all the above scores. Paulie laid down very clear guidelines as to where he was headed on *Venus And Mars* and *Speed Of Sound.* And in case you missed the roadsign, there was *Mull Of Kintyre* which turned the Christmas market here and in England last year into folksy soft soap.

In fact it was such a gigantic hit, the success of this album is pre-ordained. Watch it reach stratospheric heights on your hit parade real soon, if it hasn't already.

At least, since it weighs in at nearly 52 minutes, you can't deny McCartney is being stingy with his musical goods. Nor can you seriously deny his melodic gifts—the art of being instantly catchy *without* sounding idiotically simple.

Plus, he doesn't shortchange on variation. There are country joggers, nursery rhymes, folksy singalongs, medium paces, a few touches of rock raunch. The Beatles were the first combo in rock history to prove you could do better things with the album format than surround your one or two Big Hits with aural cotton wool. They believed in variation and so does McCartney.

Only thing is, he seems to have moved into a severe madrigal/folk period and just about everything on this album is saturated with jaunty acoustic guitars, soft lead vocals, politely tailored harmonies and relaxed backbeats. When the song is folk orientated anyway as with *Don't Let It Bring You Down* or *I'm Carrying* everything fits as it should. Lovely melodies and delivery. But it sure is strange to hear a country jogger like *Deliver Your Children* come out a la Steeleye Span with all the high-points ironed out. *Famous Groupies* is a spoof song—you can always tell when McCartney is being funny, he sings with a Liverpool accent. Actually *Groupies* has the most concise lyric on the album and it'd be a smash track if it was delivered with any energy. But then, *Name And Address* which starts out with Macca doing an impersonation of a mandraxed Elvis Presley turns into a perky rocker.

For real drek, try *Backwards Traveller,* a weak rocker that dissolves into a watery instrumental. Or the new single *With A Little Luck,* one of the most anonymously inconsequential songs Macca has ever penned.

Strangely, *Morse Moose And The Grey Goose* (don't blame me for the titles, I'm only reviewing) where McCartney tries a bit of childlike psychedelia, works well. Not as strong as *Octopus Garden* but at least as strong as *Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey* from the *Ram* album.

Considering the abundance of choc-coated mush on the album, McCartney at least had the sense to stack his opening gambits.

The opening track, *London Town,* is soft and low-key but it's marvellously structured and delivered with the sort of flair that abounded on *Band On The Run.* Same with the second number, *Cafe On The Left Bank.* And side one's closer *I've Had Enough* is not only the rockiest moment on the entire album, it's a *quality* fierce-moving, pumping rocker, tightly capped with a strutting, growling McCartney vocal. It's the sort of thing he used to toss off in clusters. No-one is denying the man a happy family life and a relaxed superstar career, but at the moment, except for a few jolts here and there, McCartney is in the business of churning out musical Pollyanna.

Derek Johnson

ELVIS COSTELLO THIS YEAR'S MODEL (Radar)

✕

Elvis Costello? Probably you've heard *of* him even if you haven't heard *Watching The Detectives* on radio or you somehow missed out on the RAM/Stiff flexidisc featuring two of the little Brit runt's songs.

The legend goes like this: discovered out of the blue he smashed England wide open last year with *My Aim Is True* and is currently making severe dents in America. There they regard him as the crowning achievement of New Wave.

In England he's regarded as a supremely talented but obsessive new star who's given people something to think about *apart* from punk.

Whatever the terminology, the gist is clear. This Elvis fellow is hot hot hot. Jump on the bandwagon everyone.

The *My Aim Is True* elpee featured Elvis as a bespectacled ranting runt, listing hurts and planning revenge. The only thing that took the edge of what could be diagnosed as rampant paranoia was the cleverness of the man, the sharp way in which he gave no pity to himself or others, yet still came up shouting with, if not optimism, at least with a fine honed lust for life and a conviction that he, puny frame, hook-nose face and all, was a man among men.

On *This Year's Model* the focus widens. Elvis is less obsessive, he's relaxing more and looking at what's going down around him.

The result? The best collection of Now fashion-conscious songs since Ray Davies started his *Dedicated Follower Of Fashion* period.

Only thing is, with Elvis there's little affectionate or escapist romanticism. He's an ugly little geek ramming his points home. A passionate horn-rimmed debater with devastating logic.

And now a word about the band. *My Aim Is True* featured a set of session players who delivered the arrangements in forthright fashion. But they're strictly low key in relation to The Attractions—Elvis' own band formed after *Aim* who've played with him live ever since. They stomp into the music with such tigerish power you can only amaze at Elvis' ability to stay on top of 'em.

For some obscure reason The Attractions aren't credited on the album. They're Pete Thomas (dms), bassist Bruce Thomas (no relation) and Steve Naive (keyboards).

If all this over the top enthusiasm doesn't get out buying the record, maybe a jobsmith account of the songs will. Like *This Year's Girl,* a sly observation on the Farrah Fawcett-Majors/Cherryl Ladd pin-up set over hammerhead drumming and a rock steady melody. Or *Living In Paradise* with a shuffling power-pop reggae detailing how dreams of soft-living actualise in soul-decaying corruption. Or *Lipstick Vogue* which whips up a truly spine-curdling intensity in the band track while Elvis spits vitriol at modern love customs. *"Sometimes I think love is just like a tumour/you've got to cut it out."* The only hope is the *"you"* the song is presumably dedicated to, 'cos *"you're* not *just another lipstick mouth."* As for El himself, he's not about to put down others without taking a clear look at himself. *"Sometimes I almost feel/Just like a human being,"* he hisses.

The album finisher, *Night Rally,* is again intense and this time near-frightening. The theme is future facism. The scene is a picture of the present National Front in the UK. *"You think they look so funny going off to their night rallies."* Until they make you go, of course.

Plus more! Like the "On the Beach" type refrain of *The Beat* with an infuriatingly simple Farfisa organ arrangement that hooks from the start.

Plus *Little Triggers,* a hypnotic, frustrated, hurt love song that's almost the mirror image of *Alison* on *Aim.* Plus *Watching The Detectives* makes its second album appearance in Oz *(it's also on the local EMI pressing of "My Aim Is True")*

Elvis is intelligent. The Attractions are gripping. The songs are passionate. He's not a pretty boy, he doesn't make pretty melodic music. But he's not grotesque and he makes passionate music. In a country currently dominated by Los Angeles computer chic, you need Elvis Costello for honest nutritional value.

Anthony O'Grady

STEELEYE SPAN STORM FORCE TEN (Chrysalis) X

After the loss of fiddler Peter Knight and guitarist Robert Johnson, Span's tenth album avoids the deliberate commerciality of the last few records. The changes were wrought by their replacements, the highly respected folkies, John Kirkpatrick and Martin Carthy (who was in an earlier line-up of the band).

Knight's distinctive fiddle now yields to Kirkpatrick's equally distinctive accordion. Its cheerful wheezing sound adds a unique archaic flavour that suits Span's less energized (but still strongly electric) folk-rock. Carthy's presence effectively stabilizes their flirtation with rock, re-emphasising the traditional origins of the music. The first casualty is the popular but insipid *All Around My Hat* era—it was the price demanded by the newcomers. Still, it's great to see the rock rhythm section of Rick Kemp and Nigel Pegrum unaffected and as direct as ever.

Of the eight tracks here, none are self-penned. The usual spectrum of Steeleye topics are aired—murders and mayhem, lust and heartbreak. Whether anguished or amused, the purity and emotive force of Maddy Prior's vocals never ceases to amaze. She is a massacring pirate in *The Black Freighter,* a widow in *The Wife Of The Soldier,* the lover of a man pressganged into the navy in *The Victory.* She duets with Tim Hart on *Awake, Awake* and *Seventeen Come Sunday.* Hart's only solo is *Treadmill Song* where instrumentation is cleverly used to evoke the heavy thud of a prisoner's boots in the mill.

But there are few voices in the band and the resulting harmonies are stunning. They peak in their most ambitious acapella to date, *Sweep, Chimney Sweep,* where the unaccompanied vocals simultaneously freeze and thaw.

For various reasons, Steeleye Span have now finally split completely. But this last album is a fitting epitaph. It is closer to the original ideal of the band. Thank heavens they were able to rise above the drab *Rocket Cottage* before they went.

Bill Holdsworth

JEAN LUC PONTY ENIGMATIC OCEAN (Atlantic) X

The credentials of violinist Jean-Luc Ponty are, to say the least, impeccable. Classically trained in France, seduced by jazz and influenced by Stephan Grappelli, he reached Anglo-American ears through albums by Frank Zappa, Elton John and the Mahavishnu Orchestra. John McLaughlin is the most obvious inspiration for his solo outings, which place him plumb in the middle of the jazz-fusion bag.

This fourth album has all the ingredients of the other three—jogging drum patterns, punch, expert bass, lush fat guitar and keyboard leads, no vocals and, of course, Ponty's majestic electric violin. Unfortunately, Ponty's talents are under a tight rein, tucked away amongst the flow. When he does step forward, he plays with a sure-fire confidence that is not substantiated by the listless material he has written. The music is therefore immaculate but transitory, technically beautiful but uneventful.

The shorter tracks *(The Trans-Love Express, Mirage, Nostalgic Lady)* are more successful. The smaller confines produce a gymnastic interplay between Ponty and his band. But the feature tracks *(Enigmatic Ocean* and, would you believe, *The Struggle Of The Turtle To The Sea)* hang together like collections of doodles, assembly-lines of effects. Full of indulgent sounds and breakneck runs, the contest rarely matches the hope.

Nothing approaches the light fantastic, say, of his first album. The musicians aren't to blame. As the cover points out, Ponty wrote, orchestrated and conducted the whole show. The pity of it is that one of the world's most galvanizing electric violinists seems to have run out of ideas.

Bill Holdsworth

CAFE JACQUES ROUND THE BACK (CBS) X

Cover notes by Genesis Man Phil Collins, to the effect that Cafe Jacques is a relief in these times of 'three chord tricks'; it's nice to see a 'new' (formed 1974, in Scotland) band not 'digressing for the sake of a quick quid'. Which could mean that Phil Collins is pleased to come across boring *young* farts comparisons have to be made. The album *is* interesting, with some first album dreadfuls (like the half-sung-in-French *Crime Passionelle;* the schoolboy French is almost as clumsy as the Beatles' similar naive effort—*Michelle*), but they're in the minority. The album harbours some very interesting snatches. (*Snatches* because none of the tracks is very long; perhaps the only feature shared with new wave in general). Take *Sands Of Singapore* f'rinstance. Just the lightest touch of the seafaring Asiatics, lots going on, plot, intelligence, unusual vocalese, the works. Bryan Ferry's *Tokyo Joe* sounds downright crass in comparison.

Hmm. Well, the band would seem to be more in the mode of a pared down 10cc, if odious

There's a hint of Sparks at times, too, often in the complex high rinky tink harmony; but unlike Sparks, Cafe Jacques are consistently intelligible.

Round The Back is very definitely a studio album. The band is a trio—they couldn't possibly reproduce their arrangements on stage, not without the aid of the five extra recruits (including Collins' percussion) they've used in the studio.

Joe Seddons

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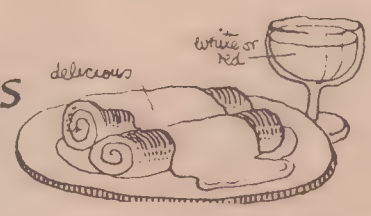

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Vinylising

ROBYN ARCHER THE WILD GIRL IN THE HEART (Larrikin)

First off, let's get one thing set—Robyn Archer is an extraordinarily *good* singer. And that's the easiest thing to get straight about this album. It's Archer's second, her first being a collection of bawdy and not-so bawdy feminist tinged songs, *The Ladies' Choice.* Like this album, it was made independently of the big record companies *(read big money).* Some help was given by the Arts Council of Australia; I'm inclined to think it came not only because of Robyn Archer's talent, but because of her material as well.

This time, she's elected to take on the supremely difficult task of setting ten contemporary Australian poems to music. Once upon a time, poetry was written to be sung; it was *lyrics.* The problem now is that modern poetry has forsaken that notion, along with courtly love, doublets and codpieces. So some of the modern verse, in fact most, of the material Archer's chosen, isn't even in *verses,* let alone nice, neat song lyrics.

At first I thought she'd failed at this brave task dismally. But with further listening, only some tracks fail completely; others come damn close to working, and I think one does, completely. Oddly enough, it's Rae Desmond Jones' poem, *The Deadshits,* written in non-rhyming loose couplets about a bikie gang-bang. Archer and her arranger, Tony Ansell, have chosen to do the poem in a hip sort of beatnik style, almost narrative over a rhythmic, spare and bassy backing, and it works.

Unfortunately, despite some very imaginative treatments and obviously a great deal of love, care and effort, the rest of the poem/song marriages don't work. Sometimes the poem simply isn't strong enough to take a song emphasis. Sometimes the readings are wrong. (Dorothy Hewett's *In Moncur Street* reads strongly on paper, but how can a singer possibly hope to transmit a sense of regret, drama, whatever it is we have poems to say for us, when she has to sing a line like *the budgie sang* within an arrangement requiring maximum breast-beating histrionics?)

Damn, how do you say an album is a noble, admirable attempt without being condescending? You can't, I suppose. Whatever, *The Wild Girl In The Heart* is at least interesting, and at best a generous hearted, praiseworthy attempt. Maybe that's part of the fault—the machinery of attempt is so clearly visible. I just wish someone would get Archer *herself* down on record, with the very best of everything available; after seeing her in concert, if someone doesn't capture her *Honky Tonk Women* at least, the world's madder than I thought.

Annie Burton

EMMYLOU HARRIS QUARTER MOON IN A TEN CENT TOWN (Warner Brothers) X

Emmylou Harris is getting more stone country with every album. With this one, she's stopped bothering to slip in much rock, now that she's established a large following among music fans who needed some initial rock sweetening before they'd take to unadulterated doses of Nashville. She's done the reverse of Dolly Parton's country to rock market crossover.

Emmylou must be a very winning lady. She's got some remarkable people to play on her album, from Presley's long time, much respected guitarist James Burton to Rick Danko and Willie Nelson on the odd harmony vocal. Her Hot Band and session ring-ins are impeccable. Take, for example, Garth Hudson's accordion on *Leaving Louisiana In The Broad Daylight,* Hank DeVito's pedal steel on just about everything, ditto Mickey Raphael's harmonica. . .

Harris herself is sounding more womanly, capable of a great variety of shadings of tenderness as well as ripping it up now and again. The mournfulness could have been overwhelming, depressing, but she displays a mercifully light, still sincere touch, along with a pleasant sense of humour—*Two More Bottles Of Wine* for example, sad and rollicking simultaneously.

She uses none of her own songs, preferring to choose songs by other writers. It's probably a much better idea to interpret somebody else's good work well, and the songs *are* good, written by Jesse Winchester, Dolly Parton, and Delbert McLinton, among others. But then Harris has always been an interpreter, since the days of her association with Gram Parsons. With *Quarter Moon In A Ten Cent Town,* Emmylou Harris shows up well under the sympathetic production of her husband, Brian Ahern—tender without being sloppy, simple without being cretinous and the artful catch in her voice more effective than ever.

Joe Sneddons

RED HOT PEPPERS RED HOT (Oz) X

Red Hot Peppers are resolutely and determinedly carving out their own unique niche in contemporary music.

Their style combines the sounds of New Orleans jazz, a smattering of other American country and folk forms and English folk with its busy fiddle and traditional ballad style.

Marion Art's voice adds its own unique hallmark to their music. Her voice has a sweet lilting top register, and a heavier, nasal lower section. She sings with a Joni Mitchell lilt, leaning into each phrase.

The songs are mostly ballads interspersed with simple instrumental interludes.

Each song highlights a particular aspect of their sound, while the arrangements try to combine *all* their cosmopolitan influences. For example, *Sitting By the Roadside (Sighing)* is predominantly a country and western ballad with a twangy slide guitar arrangement and mandolin sections, interwoven with lilting folk passages.

Tears of Silver, the single from the album is the most cohesive song, all styles knitted neatly together. Marion shines through on a graceful, flowing melody. The verses easily transcend into a smooth west-coast country instrumental.

My personal favorite though is *Heebie Jeebies.* Over the years this crazy beat-up jazz tune has been done by people like Louis Armstrong and the Boswell Sisters. Red Hot Peppers really know how to swing their jazz and it is performed in the true tradition.

Basically, this is a sit-down-and-listen album. That way you can appreciate what this band is trying to do. Personally, I think that they spread themselves too thin, drawing on too many styles. It is like edgework that has just fallen over the edge. A little bit for everyone and a lot for not too many.

Steve Smith

DOLLY PARTON HERE YOU COME AGAIN (RCA)

I reckon Dolly Parton's a wonderful lady; anyone who can go on performing and writing classic songs when all the world can take notice of is the unfortunate enormity of her tits, is, well, brave. Or something . . .

Whatever, the lady who wrote *My Tennessee Mountain Home* decided to combine pure country and what's called West Coast Hip. Sometimes it works, as in the enormously successful hit single taken from this album *Here You Come Again;* sometimes it doesn't, as in *God's Colouring Book* (no description necessary). And as for *Me And Little Andy* . . . I promised on the Chinese New Year I'd give up cynicism, but this is enough cause to take up mass murder. (Dolly finds tot and puppy in storm, takes them in, tot dies, Miz Dolly sings the chorus in the voice of a particularly sticky 6 year old).

Parton's an amazing woman—front runner in the resiliency stakes. She may help out on Emmylou Harris's records and poor li'l Linda Ronstadt's sessions, but when it comes time for *her* to record, Dolly doesn't need them ring-ins around for credibility. She's been around from the start. She's tried to cross over with this album. She just makes it.

Annie Burton

TAMMY WYNETTE ONE OF A KIND (CBS)

Once upon a time I used to find this sort of stone gone country a real shriek, and actually respected it, when I wasn't falling about laughing. But now it's starting to take on a malevolent tinge.

Tammy Wynette influences millions of country fans, at least half of them women, right? Now what kind of impression do you think a song like *I'll Be Your Bridge (Just Lay Me Down)* (and the song's true to its title) will have on respectful fans, both male and female. Acceptance of bad treatment, that's what, along with sexual double standards as the norm. *Heaven's Just A Sin Away* for a woman according to a song Wynette sings.

Yeah well, that's country—divorce, marriage, drinkin', betrayal, devotion. All that stuff. Wynette does it no better or worse than she should, and true country fans will probably love it, with the possible exception of a spoken track called *Dear Daughters,* which purports to be an apology for bein' out on the road when her girls were passing through all the magic milestones in American Southern High School life—cheerleading, cooking, all the really vital things. Wynette either really does or seems to lay her life with George Jones (her husband—ex or current, who knows?) and its difficulties on the album with complete baldness; if it seemed like honesty, well maybe, but it seems more like a fantastic method of exploitation to me.

Annie Burton

DAN HICKS IT HAPPENED ONE BITE (WEA)

Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks broke up about two years ago now. They made a smooth kind of swing sound, punctuated by violin, banjo, and Hicks' various vocal eccentricities, with an extra layer of honey cool provided by his female singers. Well-versed in scat, be-bop and the like, they produced a kind of late forties radio music, with only the lyrics tipping the wink that this was modern stuff.

Well, the band hasn't reformed; Hicks is still presumably living out his fantasies at the bottom of a pineapple-rum concoction somewhere, but he surfaced long enough to release this collection of cuts, written, according to Hicks' own liner notes, for a Ralph Bakshi film that never got released. Rather than let the tapes remain in the can where they'd been resting since 1975, Hicks buffed 'em up a bit and put 'em out.

If you're already a Hicks convert, *It Happened One Bite* could provide some more material to ease your pining. If you're not, there's not much here to interest you. Not that Hicks isn't interesting, he and his quirky music always have been, it's just that you'd be advised to try some of the earlier Hot Licks albums before embarking on this venture. Otherwise, this'll come across so laid back you won't be able to find it.

Annie Burton

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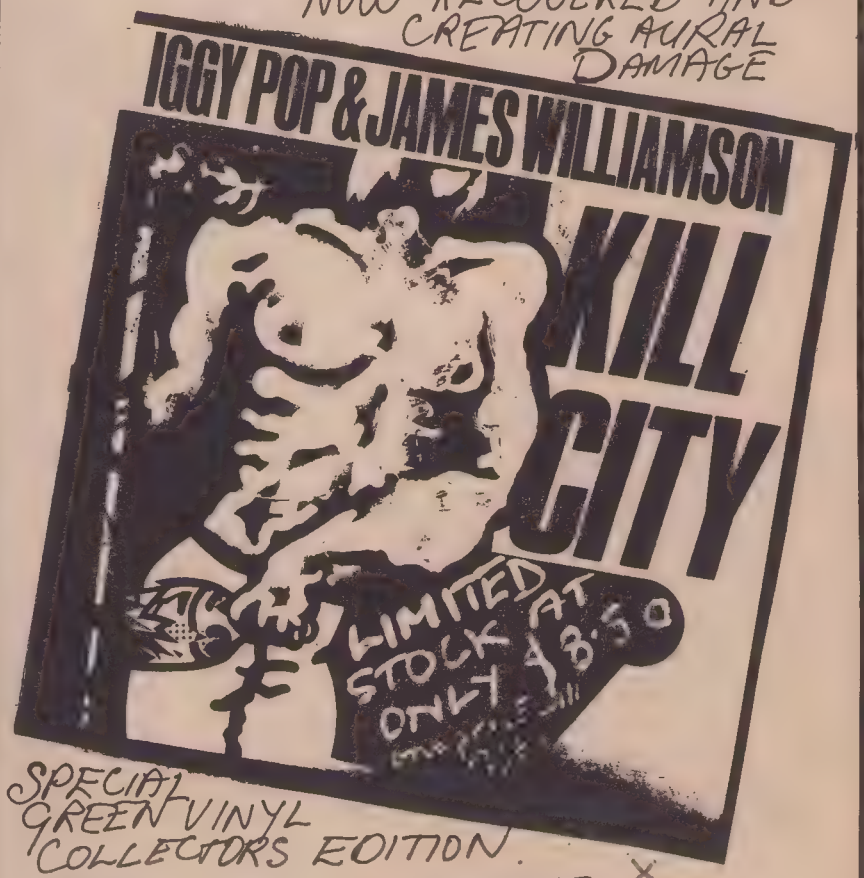

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LIGGING

DRAGON
a tale of two cities

SYDNEY

In a word, Dragon were magnificent. Their first ever headlining theatre gig in Sydney and they were both smooth and hot, both cynically cool and fervent. Old songs delivered with style, new material offered with flair. Sydney is Dragon's home base and their return was a heroes' welcome all the way down the line.

Despite the internal workings of the band being democratic, the stage focal point is Marc Hunter. In front of this crowd, all he had to do was grin lopsidedly or gyrate his groin to earn thunderous screaming. And when he took off his broad white panama to reveal newly close-cropped hair, well. . . . you don't often see the front four rows jump up to applaud a haircut.

And this wasn't a frenzied bopper crowd. Average age late teens, this lot listened raptly to the songs and boogied in the seats at every opportunity.

Just as their material ranges over a broad rock pop funk area, Dragon are capable of a *um,* variety, of shoes. When they're down and broody they're capable of giving you a dull, grinding, depressive ache. But ah, when they're hot and up, they're a hot contagious laval flow of energy.

This Time, Blacktown Boogie, Sunshine, Get That Jive all came across glistening with excellence. *Civilisation* was the most immediately appealing new song. At the same time, Marc Hunter was guiding the band unerringly down a tightrope between a good-natured, let's-all-have-fun-rock-concert vibe and a cool awareness that a performance is a piece of make-believe that *should* be sent up by both band and audience.

Only thing is, the audience reaction was so rapturous, the divisions transcended their allotted categories, fusing into one audience/band joyous participation.

Still, there were certain moments that approached the grotesque. Like *Little Miss Mercy,* where little girls joyously scream to add atmosphere to Marc Hunter's simulated rape scene. That's *their* stupidity, 'cos rape is neither glamourous or groovy. The Doors, I guess, got the same sort of reaction for *The End* but there at least Jimbo could claim he was dealing in archetypes, specifically the Oedipus Complex.

"Tis a far, far better thing I do than I've ever done before . . . 'scuse me now while I suicide in centre stage."

Little Miss Mercy is more *honestly* sordid, but the audience reaction was no less gratuitious for that. That's what I mean about Dragon being cynical. They know an audience will cheer *anything* at a hot gig.

Again, at the encore, the lengthy *Dance,* Hunter was so fervent with his *"none of us are cool, we all must be aware and* dance" rave, it wasn't till later I remembered this same man just three weeks ago snarled at me, "Don't talk about being aware man, who wants to be aware in this world."

He's crazy of course, the whole band is crazy. But they can be ridiculously marvellous.

Also in Sydney, a group called World are currently presenting themselves boldly if not successfully. World are mostly a bunch of Englishmen and Ozzies living in England, who've come to Sydney with plans to crack the scene wide open. They and their backers have opened the Star Theatre just around the corner from the Bondi Lifesaver. They put on a *free* Friday night concert, advertising it with a full page in an afternoon paper. As could have been predicted, the crowd was only a few hundred and a lot of them walked out. World's music is sort of er, let's-make-the-world-a-better-place, cosmic. Lots of smooth competence but very few balls. The next night they put on another show, charging $5.00 a head. As could have been predicted the audience was minimal. The band claim they're so far in the red by $76,000.

Anthony O'Grady

MELBOURNE

Dragon's Melbourne concert was basically lacklustre. This is a fairly conservative—if not generous—view of what others have described as "disgraceful."

My impression was more disappointment, and offence at their apathy.

Melbourne hasn't seen Dragon in top gear for a long time, so many of us were full of anticipation that this time. . .

Not on your nellie. In fact. Marc's treatment of *This Time* summed up his attitude to the crowd that had paid out good money for this fiasco. His screaming, dancing fans had learnt all the proper punch motions—just like they'd seen him do on TV. Marc took one disgusted look at them and started throwing his middle finger up in reply. . . "Oh you are a lovely audience, you are so perceptive. . ."

Great crowd psychology. In the end he had the audience divided in two. Those who would boogie on regardless of what was doing down, and those who took offence at Marc's nasty stage manner. This sector ended the night by throwing back his abuse with equal venom.

For a short while it seemed that things might go well. The power of the chundering bass intro to *Blacktown Boogie* forecast what was to be one of their best songs. And during *Same Old Blues* Marc launched into a magnificent crooning solo exhibiting the potential of his voice, and for a moment, it seemed this concert would really take flight.

This was reinforced by a new song *Civilization* by pianist Paul Hewson. It was a sophisticated boogie tune with a strong raunchy chorus.

During the evening Robert Taylor had only one guitar solo. A good Taylor solo sees the man's face almost writhing with the pain of the dexterity and concentration required to pull his fingers lithely over the strings. This Taylor solo was unusually calm and sedate.

Noone was really firing. They went through all the motions, their sound never faltered and their harmonies were spot on. But for the large part, it came across as lifeless, as if they were going through the routine. They seemed to be road-tired.

But *Any Fool Can Tell You* saw Marc at his strutting, prancing, skipping, spitting best, and the band again seemed headed in the right direction.

Meanwhile, the plea to "sing *Shooting Star"* persisted. As the plea grew, so did the band's obstinacy to play it. It seems that Marc is an easily goaded gentleman, for the sight of a crowd of adoring fans never fails to get his goat. He begs to be worshipped, but hates it when he is.

For then came *Little Miss Mercy,* a rapist song. With little

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coaxing Marc found himself a willing and eager young dancing partner. After spewing booze over her, he tantalisingly undid her shirt. Well, the poor little thing got such a fright, as soon as he released her she went scurrying back into the audience.

The element of his audience to which he was symbolically aiming this gesture thought it a fine macho scene and were blissfully ignorant of the caustic cynicism behind it.

A strange silence hung over the rest. Many were angered at the crassness and simulated (?) brutality. As a female I was offended by his attitude.

The final straw came in the encore. The audience had now parted like the Red Sea. Marc spent lengthy five minutes trying to get the entire audience to jump up and have a good time. Well those up and dancing were bored by his insistant commands, while there was absolutely no way the others were going to give Dragon *any* co-operation and they resolutely stuck to their seats.

I wonder if Dragon realises their track record in Melbourne now stands odds OFF a good concert. Unless you like paying to see a potentially outstanding group tell you how contemptuous and despicable you are.

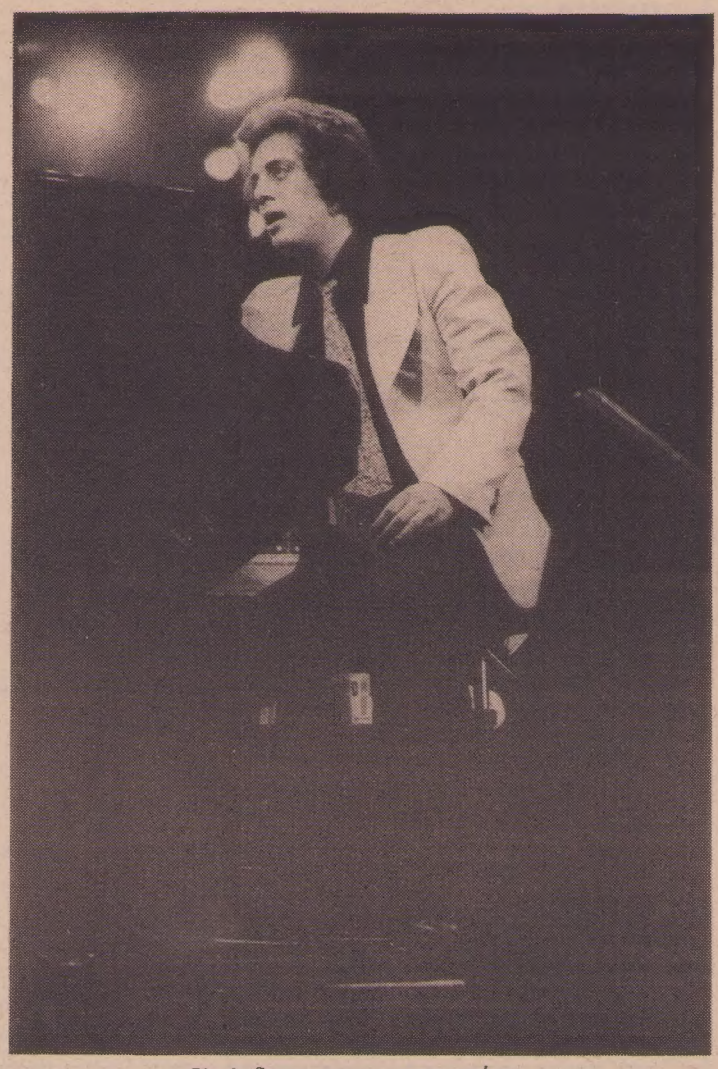
Andrea Jones

PERTH

The gut reaction from Billy Joel's Perth concert was: how the heck can a guy give so much? I mean, he played for two hours twenty minutes and gave a total of five encores to boot! And it's not as if he's a wimpoid singer/songwriter either; all his songs were up-tempo, tight and exhausting (actually there were a lot of ballads as well but I'm not going to mention them because you can hear 'em on the radio anytime).

I came to the conclusion that either Billy's got bionic fingers or that his ivories were culled from the tusks of an amphetamined elephant. He played rag-time, jazz and rock all with the same blur of speed, precision and feeling. It was like he actually *cared* for the 6,000 strong audience who'd forked out their nine bucks to see him perform.

Now Billy hasn't got the track record of Dylan, nor has he got the catalogue of hits that Elton can drag out; he hasn't even got Keith Emerson's flying piano. . . but he has got a rapport with his



Bionic fingers to create atmosphere.

fans that actually elevates him right up there into the upper echelons of rock. One moment he can be performing an exquisite piece of imagery such as *Scenes From An Italian Restaurant* and the next be standing stage right shaking hands and signing autographs, even posing for photographs; it's all part of Billy Joel's total dedication to his audience. They came for an experience and he gives it.

Perhaps the thing he does best is to create an atmosphere, a task not made easy by the vastness of the Entertainment Centre. He did it with the simplicity of the lighting—out of the darkness came a haunting late night whistle that bounced eerily about the auditorium and reduced the Centre, momentarily, to a sleazy little nightclub, two white spotlights revealed Joel as he sang *The Stranger*. A simple but very effective introduction and a far cry from the excesses of, say, ELO.

The first words he said to the audience were along the lines of *"April fools, ha ha!"* to the unfortunates sitting in the wings behind his back. As things turned out they were the luckiest people there 'cos Billy directed 90% of his banter in their general direction and always seemed to be wandering about that side of the stage smiling and laughing at them. By his own admission, this was how he strung out the act: some guys play half hour solos and use smoke bombs, but he just talked. And talked. And talked. His spiel before he launched into *The Entertainer* owed as much to Lenny Bruce as it did to the Elton John comparisons he usually gets —it incorporated all forms of R&R bullshit from Black Oak Arkansas right through to the Pistols. And, 'natch, the crowd loved it.

For a song called *New York State of Mind,* he actually tried to evoke the atmosphere of a porno movie joint by donning a pair of shades and letting a fag dangle from his bottom lip. He couldn't get the odour quite right so he had to settle for smoky red lights to give the place that sleazy feel. Then he wailed and tinkled like a butch Billie Holiday and got as much genuine applause as he did when he played *Piano Man;* this audience were prepared to take everything Bill was prepared to give. Even sitting in my incredibly uncomfortable plastic bucket (no way I'd call it a chair) the intimate feel of the performance couldn't be denied.

Thousands of people flocked down the front for the encores and they weren't doing it just to be trendy, they really wanted Billy back. He came back, did *Goodbye To Hollywood,* left, came back again and did some more, left, returned, sang *Only The Good Die Young,* then the band left (all very confusing), but they all came back to do *James* and that was that.

Dave Martin

BRISBANE

These days it seems all minority groups (i.e. all those not affiliated with the National Party), in Queensland, are suffering one hell of a bashing: Aborigines, uranium protestors, unions, conservationists, the Church, students and so on. You name 'em, Joh's bashed them. Naturally rock 'n' roll hasn't escaped his scrutiny—his latest manoeuvre, anti-noise legislation currently in Parliament, is having a devastating affect on live work.

This city already suffers from a serious shortage of venues, yet, under the guiding eye of the Licensing Branch, venues are installing volume meters with three-second warning mechanisms on the cut-out switch. Even noisy disco-machines are subject to metering. For rock musicians the legislation and device effectively halves the number of workable venues. A number of interstate groups have cancelled Brisbane dates as they were unable to perform under these conditions. A grim situation indeed, and one that won't get better.

New wave followers haven't exactly been getting it easy of late; as reported here several dances have been broken-up by special police, resulting in harrassment of new wavers all around town. At a recent 4ZZZ Joint Effort featuring Survivors and Wasted Daze, several windows in a vacant building were smashed, a toilet block vandalized and considerable university property either stolen or rendered useless. Of course the straight media immediately pointed the bone at "the punks in attendance ". Coincidentally several punks were mercilessly bashed outside in a brawl that was halted by the arrival of the Breaking and Drug Squads.

The main band, Wasted Daze, put on a tight and energetic, yet forgettable, set. In comparison to their Byron Bay performances, earlier this year, the spark was sadly missing; vocalist Terry Wilson and the boys did, however, crank out great renditions of *Get Out Of Denver, Soul Shoes* and *Rock Me Baby*. Although the crowd didn't like 'em much, I did.

There exists in Brisbane musical circles a curious beast known as the Musician's Club social night. Held once a month at the George Hotel, the night affords ample opportunity to rub shoulders with an agent or promoter at the bar, score some head with a local groupie and listen to hopefuls massacre the big hits from '72.

The purpose of the last social was to introduce local musos to The Survivors. Brisbane is funk territory, a fact which did not auger well for the band, considering the audience was almost exclusively comprised of bread and butter funk men, save for the same dozen or so punks who had the shit kicked out of them three nights previous.

The band played and the punks did their thing. Bemused funk addicts stood around muttering to themselves until the vibe got heavy. Eventually several started chanting *"new wave shit sucks"*. Need I say any more, 'cept the same punks got pummelled, again, and everybody had a jolly good time.

This bulletin was brought to you by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau.

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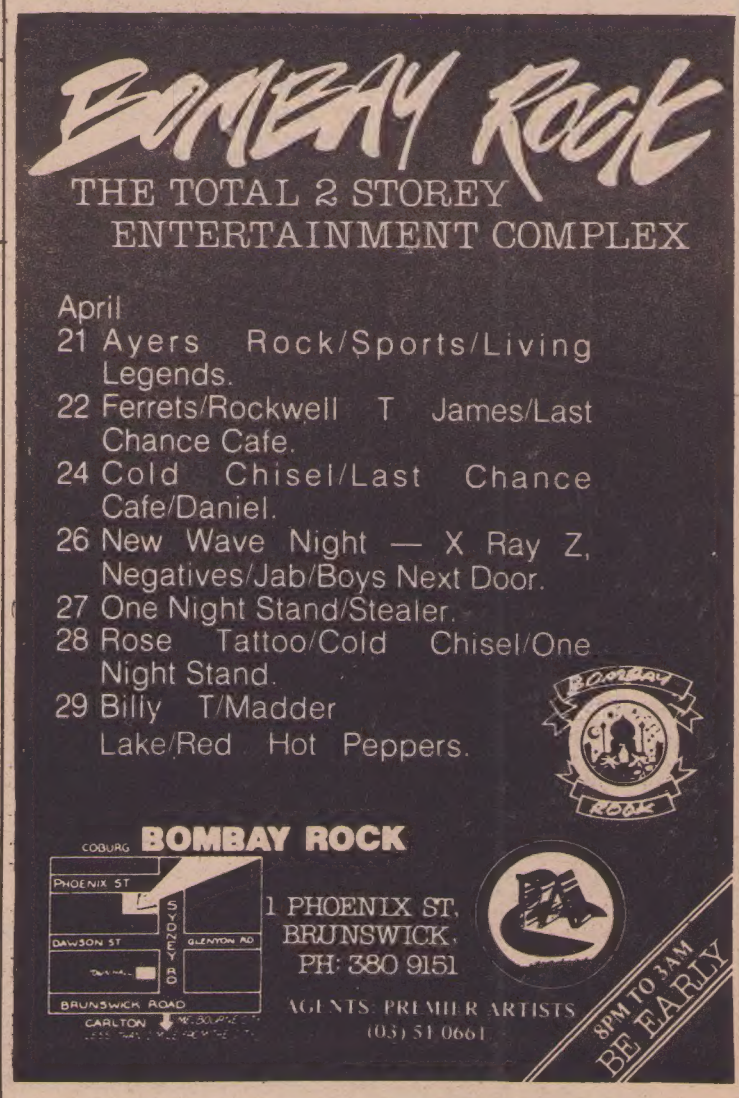

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SYDNEY

BONDI LIFESAVER
April
22 Hot Property/Texas/Flowers
23 Russell Morris & The Richard Clapton Band (sans R.C.)
25 Hot Cottage
26 Daniel/Phil Manning
27 Jeff St. John /Gunsmoke/ Flowers
28 Sports
29 Midnight Oil/Raven
30 Angels/Gunsmoke

May
5 Ferrets
6 Cheek

WAR AND PEACE (Parramatta)
April
22 Voodoo
23 Angels
25 Windchase
26 Jeff St. John
27,28,29 South Harlem Concerto
30 Stylus

RIVERWOOD HOTEL
April
22 Winter

CLUB ALEXANDER REVESBY
April
22 Starlighters

SELINA'S
22 Ayers Rock

OCEAN BEACH HOTEL
22 Jade

DOLYSON R.S.L.
25 Geeza

MAROUBRA SEALS
April
22&23 Afrika
27&28 Big Swifty
4&5 Hot Cottage
5 Eddie Haley and The Starlighters

KAREELA GOLF CLUB
April
25 Mr. George
27 Afrika
30 Taxi

May
2 Beagle Boys
4 Magnam

COLLEGIANS FOOTBALL CLUB
May
2 Hot Rox

AMBASSADOR NIGHT CLUB Newcastle
April
22&23 Stylus
25 Skyhooks
27,28,29,30 Scandal

STAGE DOOR TAVERN
April
21 Scandal/Shute
22 Ted Mulry Gang/Fusion
27 Cyril B. Bunter Band
28 Manning
29 Kevin Borich Express

May
4 Cyril B. Bunter Band

A.B.C. STUDIO 221
April
25 Russel Morris & R.C. Band

MAWSON HOTEL
April
26 Angels
28 Doug Parkinson & The Southern Star Band

May
3 Feather

SUNDOWNER HOTEL Canterbury Rd., Punchbowl
April
23 Moewinkle
24 Magnam
28 Moewinkle

FLOYDS DISCO Canberra
April
25 Kevin Borich Express
26&27,28 Russel Morris & R.C. Band

May
2 Sports

REVESBY WORKERS CLUB
April
22 Little River Band
23 Little River Band

PADDINGTON TOWN HALL
April
23 Skyhooks

ILLAWARRA CATHOLIC CLUB
April
26 Beagle Boys

CARLTON REX HOTEL
April
26&27 Zippitydoo
28 Magic

ST. MARY'S BAND CLUB
April
22 Stoneman Cooper
29 Stoneman Cooper

LOUIS LOFT
April
22 Zippitydoo
28 Garbo

WESTOWER TAVERN
April
22 Garbo
27&28 Zippitydoo
29 Mr. George

GREYSTANES INN
April
25 Toons
26 Sailing
27 Toons
28 Complex/Toons

May
2 Toons
3 Sailing
4 Toons
5 Complex

PENRITH LEAGUES
April
28 Casablanca
30 Russel Morris & The R.C. Band
May
6 Mr George

BRIGHTON HOTEL
April
28, 29 Magnam
5&6 Magnam

BLACKTOWN R.S.L.
April
25 Ol' 55
28 Eddie Haley & The Starlighers
29 Big Swifty

CANDY FACTORY
April
25 Afrika
27 As It Is

MANLY VALE HOTEL
April
22 Bilgola Bop Band/Jeff St. John
28 Skyhooks/Phil Manning
29 Angels/Flowers
May
5 Mother Goose/Phantom
6 Stars/Bilgola Bop Band

CIVIC HOTEL
April
22 Anne Kirkpatrick Band

LIMERICK CASTLE
April
24 Anne Kirkpatrick Band

May
2 Toons

N.S.W. UNI Roundhouse
April
26 Sports/Skyhooks

JAM DISCO
April
22 Kevin Borich Express
26 Skyhooks

FRENCH'S TAVERN
April
21 Toons

SYDNEY UNI Wesley College
April
28 Bilgola Bop Band/Angels

COOGEE OCEANIC
April
22 Beagle Boys
26 As It Is

MELBOURNE

BANANAS
April
21 Rockwell T James & Rhythm Aces/Living Legends
22 Ayers Rock/X Ray Z
24 New Wave Night. . . 4 bands. X Ray Z, Boys Next Door, Teenage Radio Stars, Negatives
25 Redhouse
26 Stylus
27 Last Chance Cafe
28 Sidewinder/Parachute
29 Ross Wilsons Mondo Rock

May
1 New Wave Night (see 24 April)
2 Redhouse
3 Stylus
4 Last Chance Cafe
5 Sports
6 Russel Morris

LONDON TAVERN
April
21 Ayers Rock
22 Dave Warner from the Suburbs
24 High Rise Bombers
25 Last Chance Cafe
26 Red Hot Peppers
27 High Rise Bombers
28 Ross Wilson's Mondo Rock
29 Sidewinder

Leo Kottke — ace quitarist tours Oz for ACE (Aust. Concert Entertainment) in April. (See Tours).

May
1 Phil Manning
2 Last Chance Cafe
3 Red Hot Peppers
4 High Rise Bombers
5 Sports

PROSPECT HILL HOTEL
21 Tourists
22 arvo Red Hot Peppers eve Gypsy
24 Mother Goose
25 Ross Wilsons Mondo Rock
26 Cold Chisel
27 Bandaid
28 Tourists
29 arvo Red Hot Peppers eve Gypsy

May
1 Kevin Borich Express
2 Madder Lake
3 Ross Wilsons Mondo Rock
4 Bandaid
5 Tourists

STATION HOTEL
April
21 Mick Elliot Band
22 arvo the Elks eve Blue Rockets
25 Sultan Bros
27 Riverina Playboys
28 Calvyndarragh Band
29 arvo Billy T eve Blue Rockets

May
2 Red Hot Peppers
5 Avalanche

CENTRAL CLUB, HOTEL RICHMOND
Wednesday nights. . . Blue Rockets
Friday nights. . . Moose Malone

BOMBAY ROCK
April
21 Ayers Rock/Sports/Living Legends
22 Ferrets/Rockwell T James/ Last Chance Cafe
24 Cold Chisel/Last Chance Cafe/ Daniel
26 New Wave Night—X Ray Z, Negatives/Jab/Boys Next Door
27 One Night Stand/Stealer
28 Rose Tattoo/Cold Chisel/ One Night Stand
29 Billy T/Madder Lake/Red Hot Peppers

May
3 New Wave Night as above (26)
4 One Night Stand/Stealer
5 Kevin Borich Express/Angels/ Gentry

MARTINIS
April
21 Feather
22 Rockwell T James and the All Stars
25 Autodrifters
26 Last Chance Cafe
27 Billy T
28 Ayers Rock
29 Stiletto

May
2 Tourists
3 Last Chance Cafe
4 Sports
5 The Elks

KINGSTON
April
21 Avalanche
22 Sports
24 Red Hot Peppers
25 Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons
26 High Rise Bombers
27 Tourists
28 Sidewinder
29 Autodrifters

May
3 Savanna Silver Band
4 Manning
5 Flying Saucers

BRISBANE

PRINCE ALFRED HOTEL, Booval
April
24-30 Circus
May
1—7 Felix

HOMESTEAD HOTEL, Zillmere
April
24-7 Mixtures

TOP OF THE STATE, SGIO Building
24-7 Everton Park

NATIONAL HOTEL, City
April
24-30 Casper

May
1-7 Bruce Melbourne

JET CLUB, Gold Coast
24-7 Heart and Soul

THE PATCH, Coolangatta
April
25-28 Stars
29 Little River Band
May
3-6 Jeff St. John

BROTHERS RUGBY LEAGUE, Grange
May
7 Jeff St. John

4ZZZ JOINT EFFORT, Qld Uni
May
5 Jeff St. John

GEORGE HOTEL, City
May
5 Rose Tattoo

CLEVELAND SANDS, Cleveland
May
6 Rose Tattoo

EAST RUGBY LEAGUE, Cooparoo
May
7 Rose Tattoo

PERTH

CITY HOTEL
May
2 Western Flyer
3 Free Emission
5 Everest
10 Free Emission
12 Everest

STEVE'S HOTEL
May
7 Free Emission
12 White Jam
14 Free Emission

KEWDALE HOTEL
May
7 Everest
14 Everest

RAFFLES HOTEL
May
6 Free Emission
12 Hamlett Huff
13 Everest

MOSMAN PARK HOTEL
May
5 Free Emission

6 Everest
7 Bag A Bones

SCARBOROUGH HOTEL
6 Hamlett Huff
7 Hamlett Huff
13 Hamlett Huff

VICTORIA HOTEL
May
4 Western Flyer

SHENTON PARK HOTEL
May
6 Western Flyer

TOURS

LEO SAYER w. MOONLIGHT
APRIL
23 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
25 Brisbane Festival Hall
29 Canberra Theatre

May
1 Newcastle Civic Theatre
4 Hobart City Hall
5 Launceston Princess Theatre
7 Melbourne Festival Hall
13 Adelaide Apollo Stadium
17 Perth entertainment Centre

DRAGON
April
21 Mackay Theatre Royal
22 Townsville, Dean Park Sound Shell
26 Home Hill Memorial Hall
27 Ingham Shire Hall
28 Innisfail Shire Hall
29 Cairns National Fitness Youth Centre

May
1 Bowen High School
3 Urangan
4,5,6 Gold Coast Playroom

LEO KOTTKE
April
21 Canberra Theatre
22 Sydney Regent Theatre
26 Perth Concert Hall
28 Adelaide Festival Theatre
30 Brisbane, Her Majesty's Theatre

RY COODER
May
1 Sydney Opera House
2 Brisbane City Hall
4 Melbourne Palais Theatre
7 Canberra Theatre
10 Perth Concert Hall
13 Adelaide Town Hall
17 Wellington, St. James Theatre
19 Christchurch Town Hall

CHICK COREA
May
10 Sydney Regent Theatre
12 Adelaide Festival Theatre
16 Perth Concert Hall
19 Melbourne Palais Theatre
21 Canberra Theatre
24 Brisbane Festival Hall

STARS
April
21 Gold Coast Playroom
23 Her Majestys Theatre, Brisbane
25 The Patch, Surfers
26 Wynnum Manly Leagues Club, Brisbane
28 The Patch, Surfers
29,30 Gold Coast Playroom

KEVIN BORICH EXPRESS
April
21 Manly Vale Hotel
22 Jam Disco, Liverpool
25 Floyd Hotel, Canberra
28 Coogee Bay Hotel
29 Lidcombe Dancers Club (early) Stage Door Tavern (late)

TMG
April
26 Burnie Town Hall
27 Devonport Recreation Centre
28 Launceston Albert Hall
29 Hobart City Hall

May
2 Shepparton Civic Centre
3 Swan Hill Town Hall
4 Renmark Institute Hall
5 Redcliffs Civic Centre

JEFF ST. JOHN
April
21 Muswellbrook RSL
22 Manly Vale Hotel
24 Fraternity Club, Wollongong
26 Macquarie Uni (avo) War & Peace, Parramatta
27 Bondi Lifesaver
29 Northern Suburbs Leagues Club, Wollongong

May
2 Brisbane
3 Patch's, Brisbane
4 Brisbane
5 Queensland Uni

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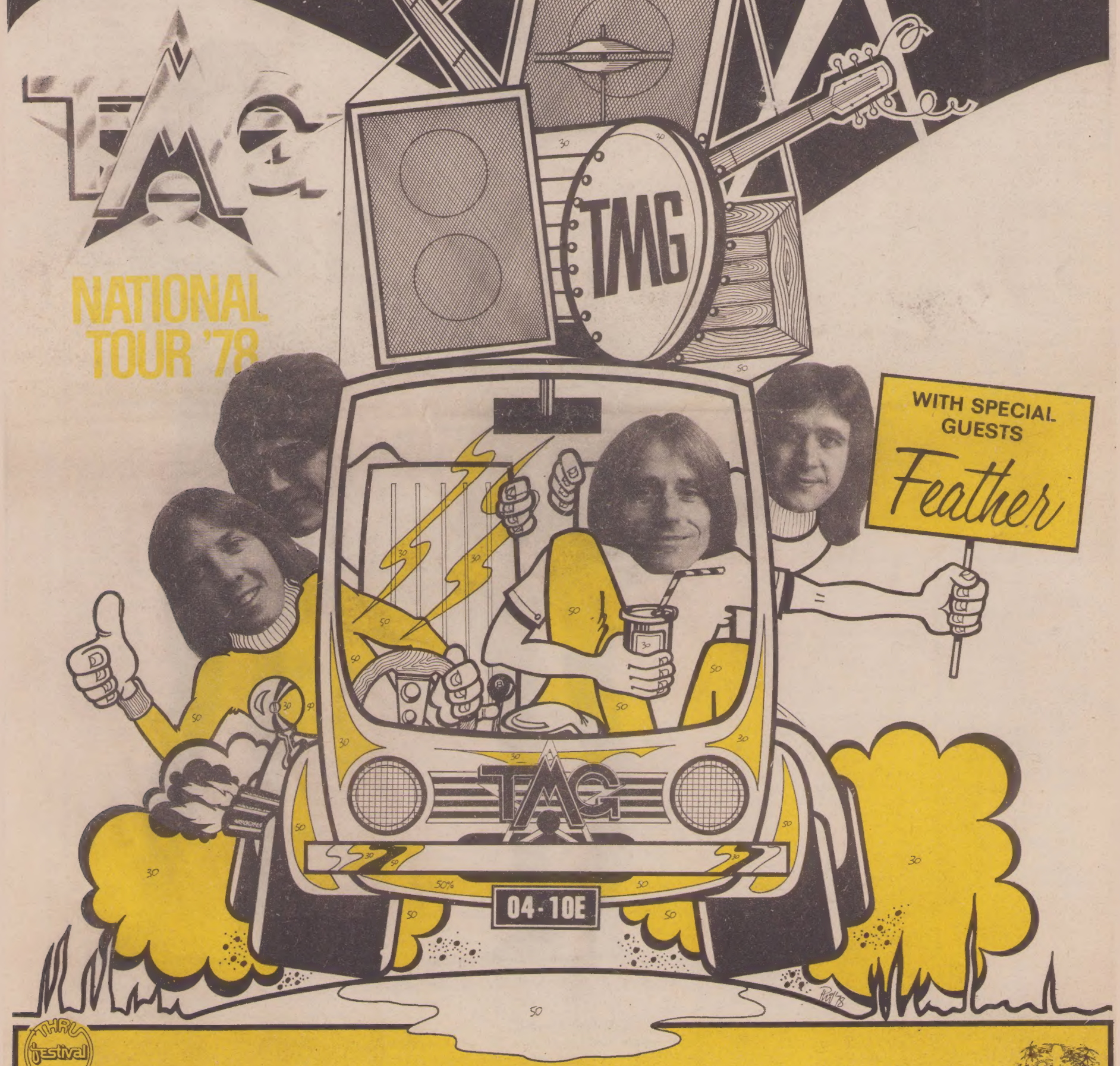

THRU festival

APRIL	26 Burnie Town Hall	8 Sale Town Hall	19 Adel — The Barton Town Hall
	27 Devonport Recreation Centre	9 Morwell Technical School	21 Port Pirie — Cinema One
	28 Launceston Albert Hall	10 Colac High School	22 Whyalla Westlands
	29 Hobart City Hall	11 Hamilton Town Hall	26 June 1 W.A. country watch for dates
MAY	2 Shepparton Civic Centre	12 Horsham Theatre	**JUNE** 22 Pert Concert Hall
	3 Swan Hill Town Hall	13 Ballarat Municipal Hall	3-15 WA country
	4 Renmark Inst. Hall	14 Geelong Showground	18-30 North country
	5 Redcliff Civic Centre	16 Melbourne Festival Hall	**JULY** 12 Queensland
	6 Bendigo Showground	18 Mount Gambier-Kings Theatre	13-31 N.S.W.

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